OVER ONE HUNDRED HOT GAMES REVIEWED INSIDE

ARNOLD!
Megadrive Terminator: Development Report

ISSUE 53
February 1992
£1.80

ACE

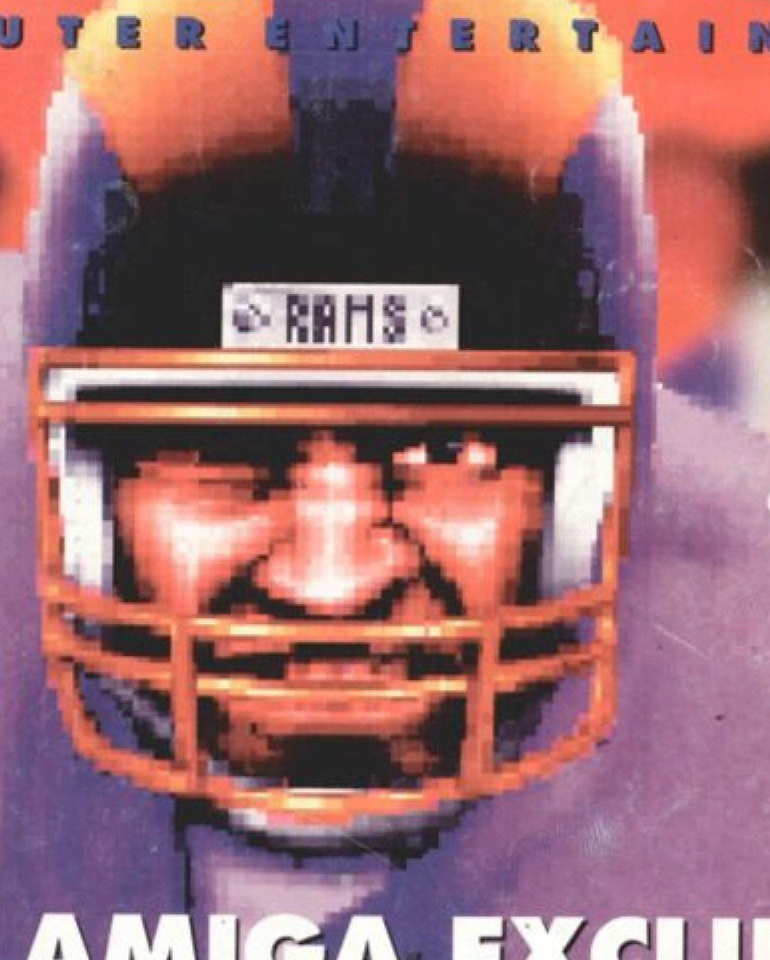
ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

THE ESSENTIAL GAMES BUYER'S GUIDE

- AMIGA
- PC
- ST
- CONSOLES
- HANDHELDS

YIKES!

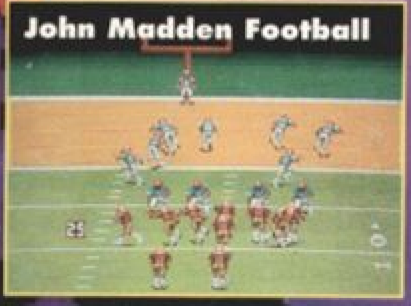
43 Page SCREENTEST™ Section
The World's Most Detailed Reviews & Ratings



CHEAT!
Populous II
Heimdall
Cruise for a Corpse
TIPS INSIDE

PLUS:
In The Works
Previews
News
Console Reviews

Falcon 3.0

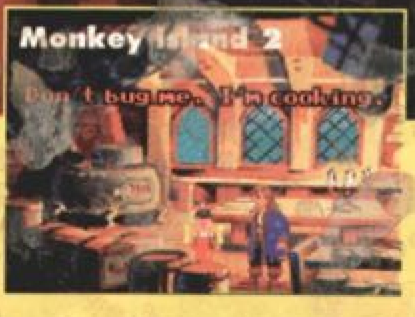

John Madden Football

The Godfather

Elvira 2

...ixion, I've been captured by this triple headed guy with a severe body hair problem. He says he's gonna sacrifice me at midnight.

Legend of the Longbow


Monkey Island 2

Don't bug me. I'm cooking.

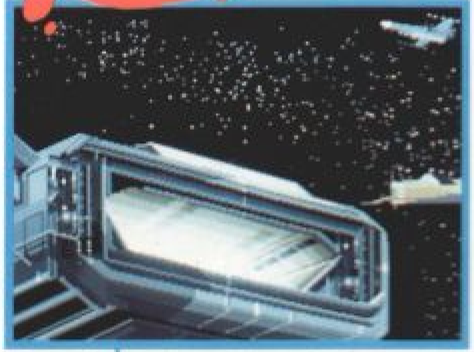
AMIGA EXCLUSIVE MADDEN!

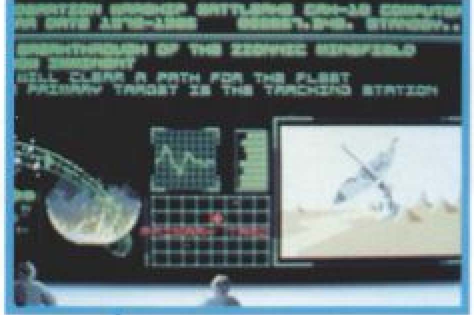
Storming Conversion of EA's Gridiron Giant

EXCLUSIVE PC REVIEW! MONKEY ISLAND 2

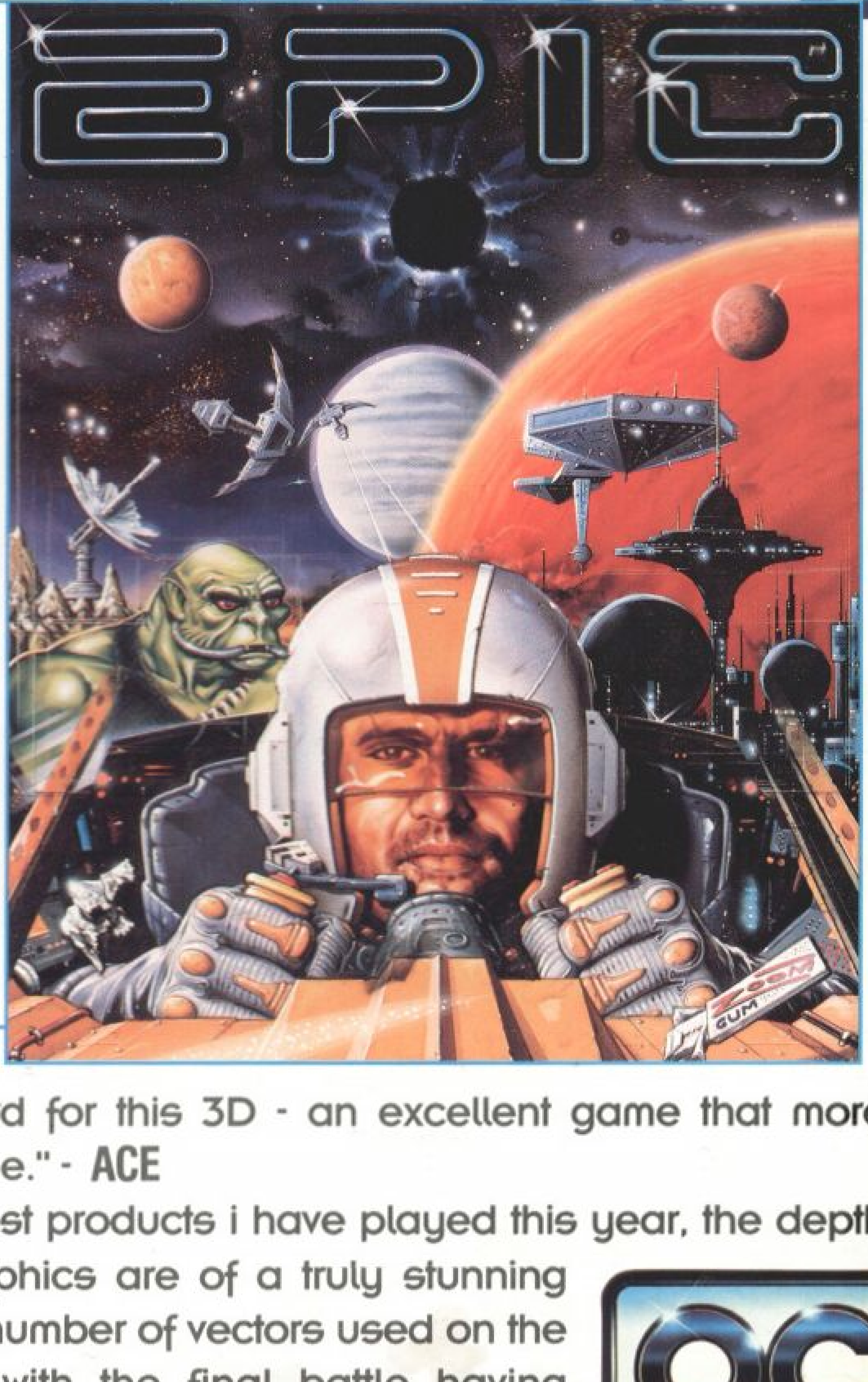
The Best Adventure in the Whole World – Ever!

2 3D SPE





ILL CLEAR A PATH FOR THE FLEET
PRIMARY TARGET IS THE TRACKING STATION



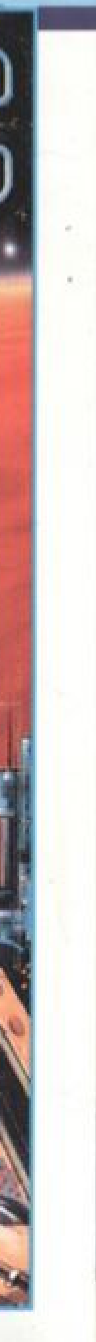
"Fast just isn't the word for this 3D - an excellent game that more than lives up to it's name." - **ACE**

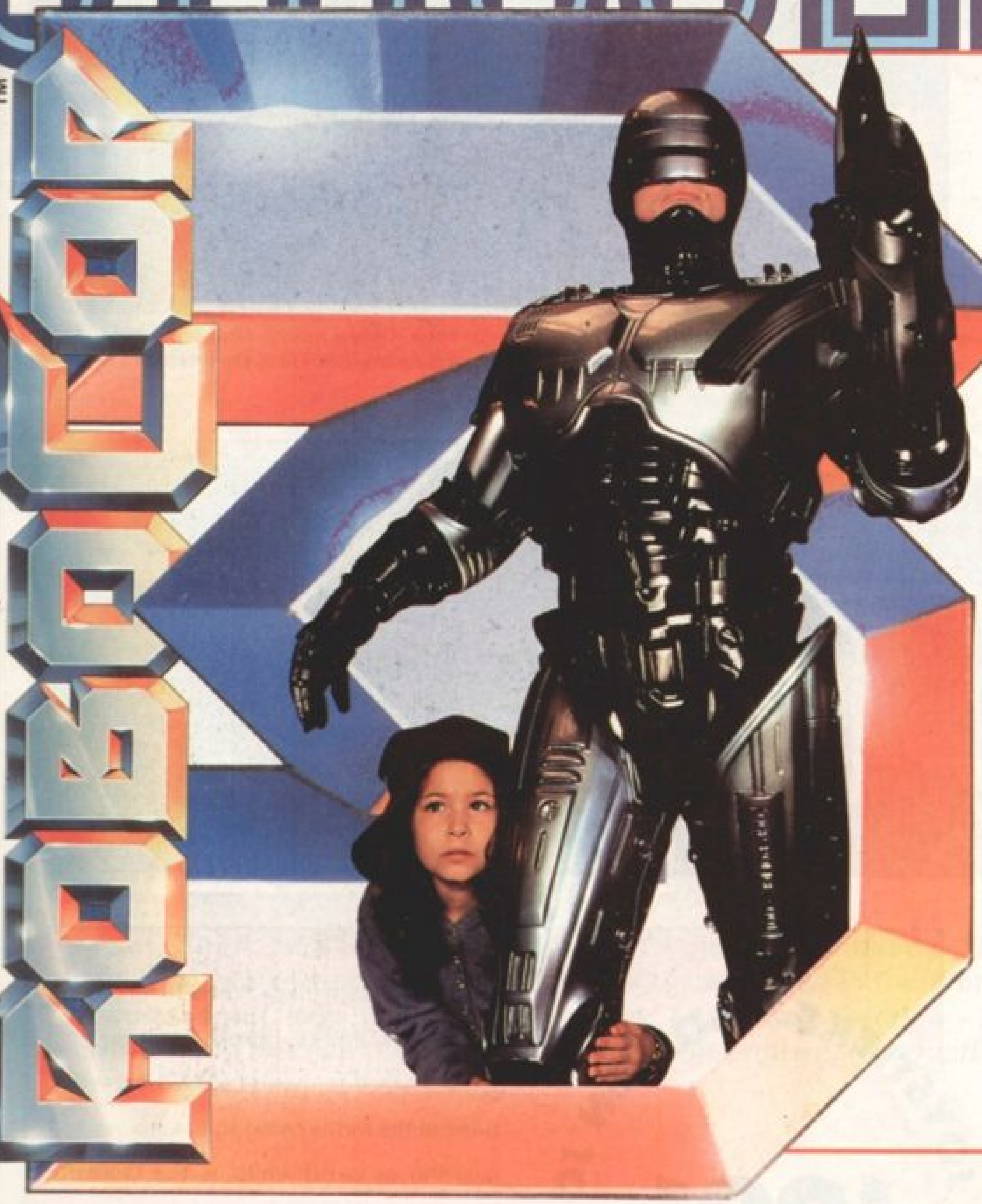
"Epic is one of the finest products i have played this year, the depth of gameplay and graphics are of a truly stunning standard. .. the sheer number of vectors used on the screen is incredible with the final battle having over 500 independently minded ships." - Games X

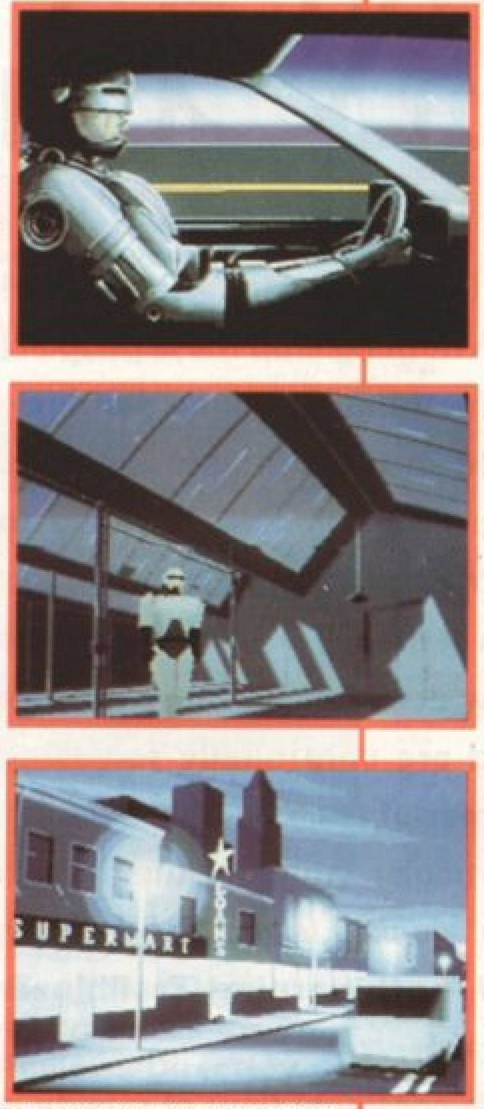
BOTH AVAILABLE FOR ATARI ST

OCEAN SOFTWARE LIMITED . 6 CENTRAL STREET . MANC

CTACULARS







TM & © 1991 ORION PICTURES CORPORATION.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

ore "Knocks your socks off... you've never seen 3D as good as this. The 3D twist works extremely well and arguably makes Robocop 3

oth the best film licence yet." - **ACE** "The vectors are super slick and smooth, all animations are top notch, giving us some of the best vectors around and the screens are superbly drawn. This is definitely one of the best film licences yet." - **GAMES X**

GTAMIGA - IBM PC & COMPATIBLES

. MANCR M2 5NS . TEL: 061 832 6633 . FAX: 061 834 0650

ACE

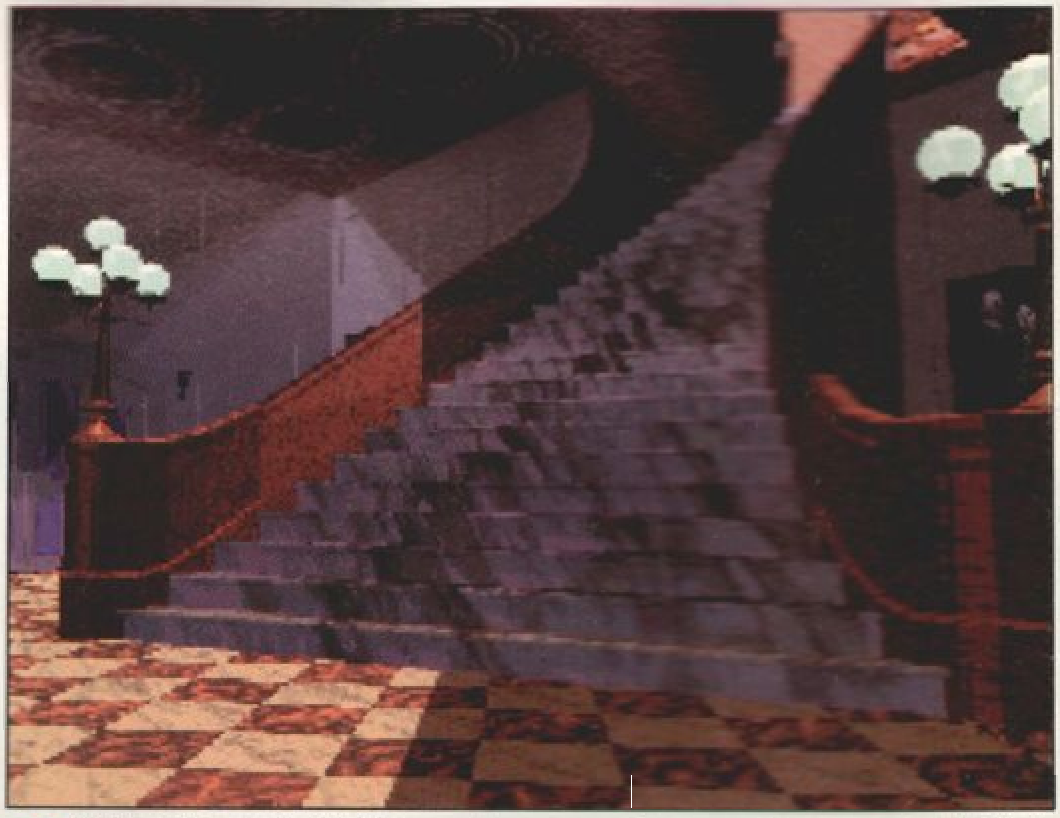
No.53 FEB 1992

By the mighty stones of Jupiter! Can nothing stop these people?! Something has gone seriously right in the software industry. The firms who we all used to know and love for churning out run of the mill beat-'em-ups have now gone into quality overdrive and are continually releasing games of a remarkable class.

Particular stunners this month are *Monkey Island 2* and *Falcon 3.0,* both earning Trailblazer awards.

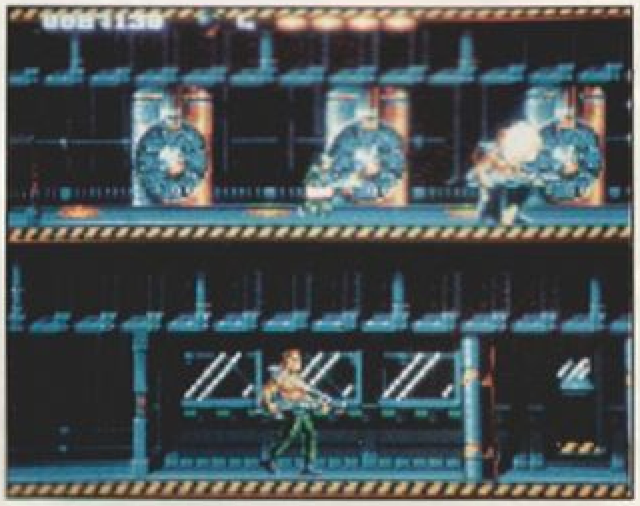
This continual flow of quality is putting us in quite a tricky spot marking-wise, and that's for sure. Even in the light of our new regime of tough scoring, we've had to award some blisteringly high scores this month, simply because the games are so good. Still, if software releases continue to improve at this amazing rate, it looks like we're stuck with it!

Happy New Year!



21 Well, maybe we shouldn't have spoken so soon. Only a month after we decided that all these interactive movies were rubbish, American firm Trilobyte produce THIS!

25 With an impressive portfolio of no-nonsense coin op conversions and high-adrenaline movie tie-ins, the job of producing Virgin's forthcoming Terminator game for the Megadrive was the next logical step for Probe Software. Will Arnie *finally* get the computer game he deserves?



GOLDEN JOYSTICKS GOLDEN JOYSTICKS 1991 *Awards*

There are many forms to fill out in life. Poll tax forms, bank forms, credit forms and so on. However, none of the forms listed above are half as exciting or worthwhile as the Golden Joystick Voting Form which you will find on page 12.

Not only does the Form give you the chance to let the Industry really know what you think of their software, but it gives you the chance to win £500 worth of games in our Grand Prize Draw!

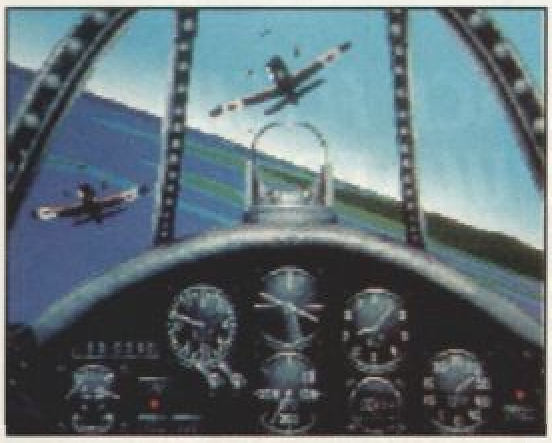
Editor Jim Douglas. *Bitterness Expert* David Upchurch. *Art Editor* Jim Willis. *Designer* Jenny Abrook. *Staff Writer* Gary Whitta. *Contributor* Lovely Rik Haynes, *Photography* Edward Park. *Advertising Manager* Mike Wills. *Senior Sales Executive* Tina Zanelli. *Advertising Production* Esther Rodd, Remzi Salih. *Head Paper Shuffler* Garry Williams. *Subscriptions* PO Box 500, Leicester LE99 0AA. Tel: 0733 898100. *Colour Origination* Pro Print Repro,Barking Road, E13. *Typesetting* Pre-Press Ltd. *Distribution* EMAP Frontline, Park House, 117 Park Road, Peterborough, PE1 2TR. *Printing* Severn Valley Press, Caerphilly. © EMAP Images 1992

No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form, transmitted or stored in a data retrieval system without permission from the publishers.

This month's cover illustration was produced by Dokk from out of Strangeways. Sorry about the pixallation - duh!

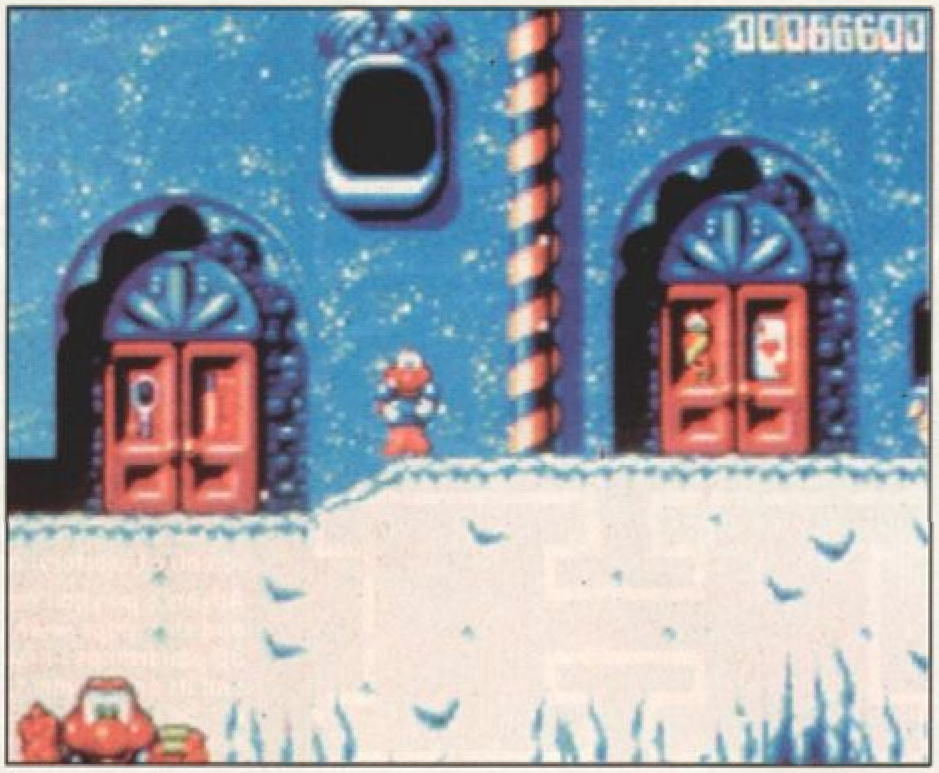
An EMAP Images publication. Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London. Tel: 071 251 6222. Fax: 071 490 1095.

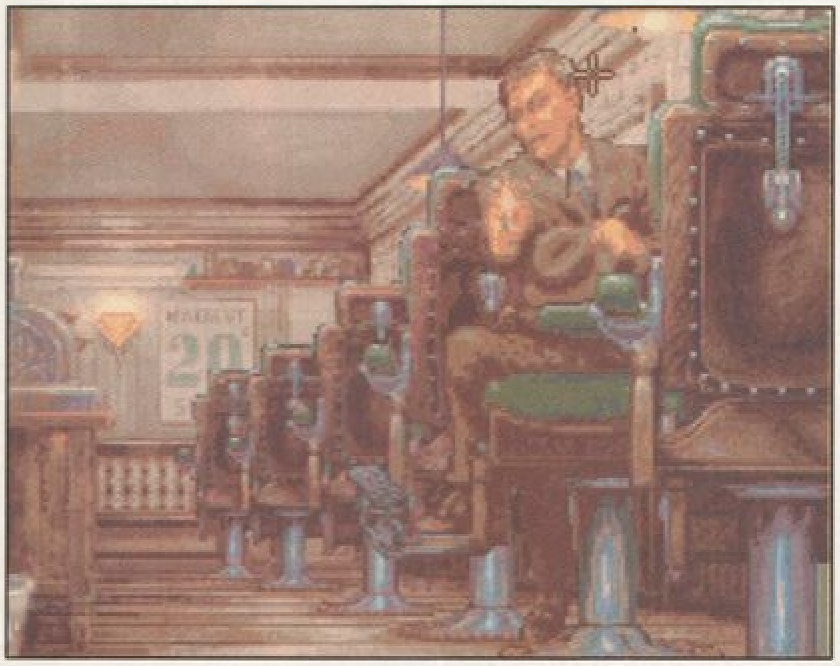
contents



32 Gary Whitta's Previews makes a welcome return to its two-page format. And doesn't it look good for it?

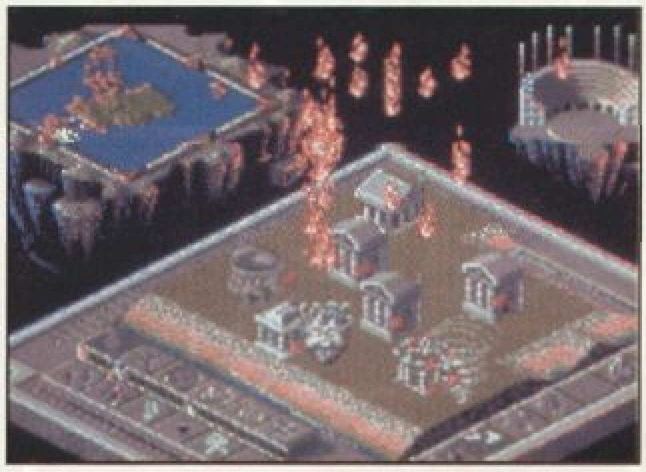
38 US Gold's The Godfather may well be a perfectly good shoot-'em-up, but is it *really* anything like playing the film, *at all*?





78 We raved about it the month before last on Amiga and now the Megadrive version gets the same treatment; Robocod, under the Electronic Arts label.

84 Populous 2, may well be one of the finest games in the world today, but it's not easy, is it? Check out our tips special and your omnipotent worries will be over.



7 News - Super NES hits the UK, *Prince of Persia* on Gameboy, *The Addams Family* on CD-Rom. 12 The Golden Joysticks Voting Form 14 Letters. 21 In the Works - *Guest* from Virgin and *Terminator* from, erm, Virgin. 32 Previews. 74 Console Section - Newest releases for your entertainment system. 84 Tricks'n'Tactics - *Populous 2, Heimdall*. 90 Reviews Directory.

REVIEWS

The Best Reviews On The Planet!

38

Godfather

With the third episode in the movie saga getting a luke-warm reception, US Gold's intepretation of the Godfather is going to have to stand on its own two feet. But how well will it fare?

44

Conquests of the Longbow

Yes, alright, so we called it Legend of the Longbow on the cover, and it's actual title is Conquests of the Longbow, Legend of Robin Hood. But that's all by the by, because it's a cracking game!

50

Falcon 3.0

The Best Flight Game In The Whole World Ever! Even grumpy old marks-miser Douglas was impressed with Spectrum Holobyte's latest offering. So impressed, that he's given it his highest mark ever!

56

Elvira 2 - Jaws of Cerberus

Phoar! This sequel to the popular *Dungeon Master*-style adventure features a huge slavering beast from Hell sure to shock gamers to their very socks. And Cerberus is pretty frightening too!

62

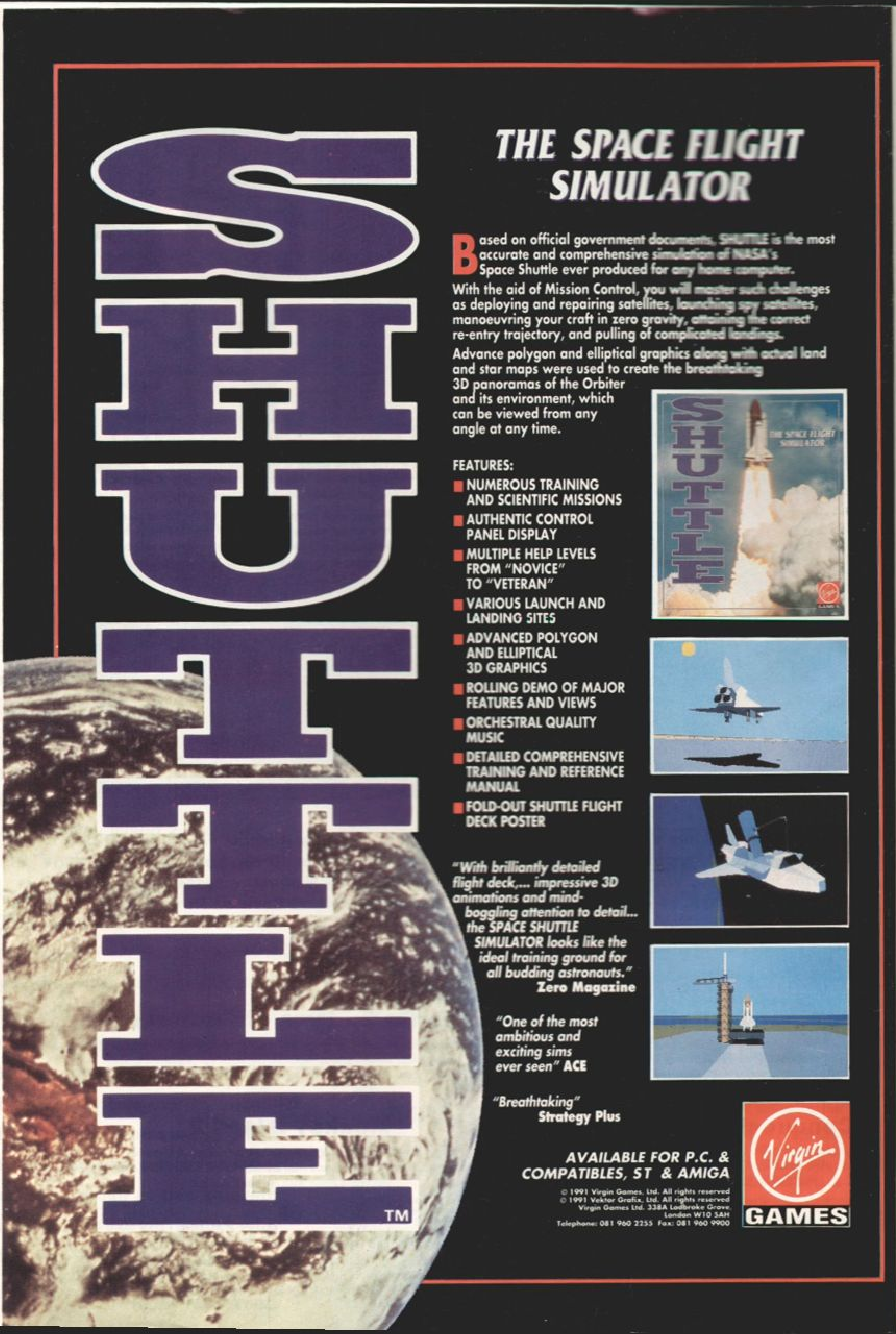
Monkey Island 2

Funny Dave Upchurch reckons that Monkey Island 2 is the best adventure he's ever played, and who are we to argue? Lucasfilm sweep the board again with "9"s and awards.

68

John Madden Football

Electronic Arts win again with the Amiga conversion of the game that wowed the Megadrive world a few months ago. And Gary Whitta just can't get enough of John's hot action.



SHUTTLE™

THE SPACE FLIGHT SIMULATOR

Based on official government documents, SHUTTLE is the most accurate and comprehensive simulation of NASA's Space Shuttle ever produced for any home computer.

With the aid of Mission Control, you will master such challenges as deploying and repairing satellites, launching spy satellites, manoeuvring your craft in zero gravity, attaining the correct re-entry trajectory, and pulling of complicated landings.

Advance polygon and elliptical graphics along with actual land and star maps were used to create the breathtaking 3D panoramas of the Orbiter and its environment, which can be viewed from any angle at any time.

FEATURES:

- NUMEROUS TRAINING AND SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS
- AUTHENTIC CONTROL PANEL DISPLAY
- MULTIPLE HELP LEVELS FROM "NOVICE" TO "VETERAN"
- VARIOUS LAUNCH AND LANDING SITES
- ADVANCED POLYGON AND ELLIPTICAL 3D GRAPHICS
- ROLLING DEMO OF MAJOR FEATURES AND VIEWS
- ORCHESTRAL QUALITY MUSIC
- DETAILED COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING AND REFERENCE MANUAL
- FOLD-OUT SHUTTLE FLIGHT DECK POSTER

"With brilliantly detailed flight deck,... impressive 3D animations and mind-boggling attention to detail... the SPACE SHUTTLE SIMULATOR looks like the ideal training ground for all budding astronauts."
Zero Magazine

"One of the most ambitious and exciting sims ever seen" **ACE**

"Breathtaking"
Strategy Plus

AVAILABLE FOR P.C. & COMPATIBLES, ST & AMIGA

© 1991 Virgin Games, Ltd. All rights reserved
© 1991 Vektor Grafix, Ltd. All rights reserved
Virgin Games Ltd. 338A Ladbroke Grove,
London W10 5AH
Telephone: 081 960 2255 Fax: 081 960 9900

NEWS
GAMES
NEWS
GAMES

SCARED OUT OF YOUR WITS

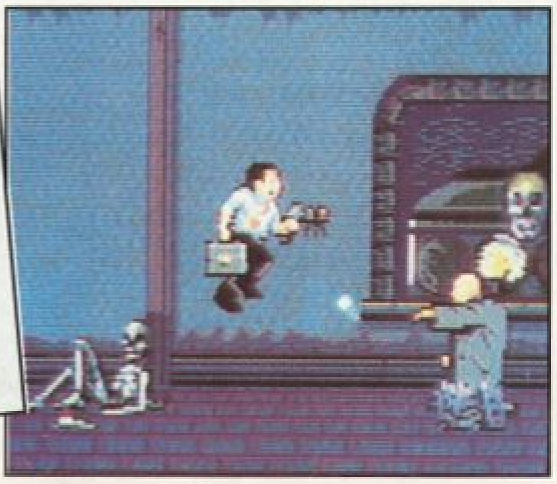
Apart from spawning a hit television series and motion picture, Charles Addam's ghoulish cartoon characters are now appearing in interactive form.

The Addams Family from Paramount Pictures starring Anjelica Houston, Christopher Lloyd and Raul Julia opened across Britain, appropriately enough, on Friday 13 December. This creepy black comedy is reportedly the biggest grossing movie since Terminator 2 and Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves.

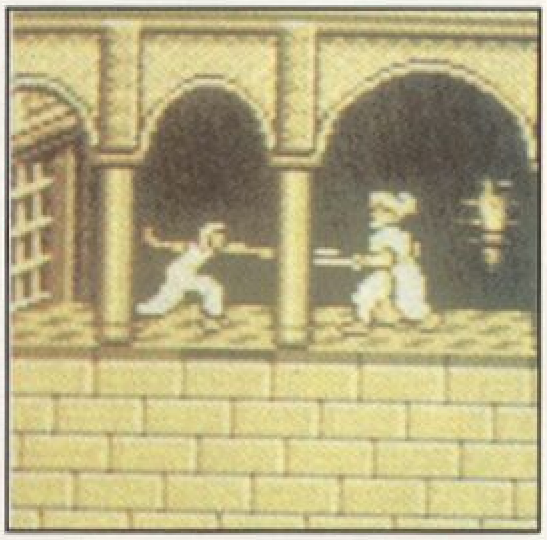
ICOM Simulations has developed a CD-ROM Addams Family game for the TurboGrafix (PC Engine). It's already on sale in the USA for a little over sixty dollars and is apparently the first TurboGrafx-CD game to feature 'realtime scrolling' for smooth scene changes. ICOM Simulations is the respected multimedia developer that previously created the revolutionary Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective, a most elaborate production with digitised footage of live actors, real sets and human voices.

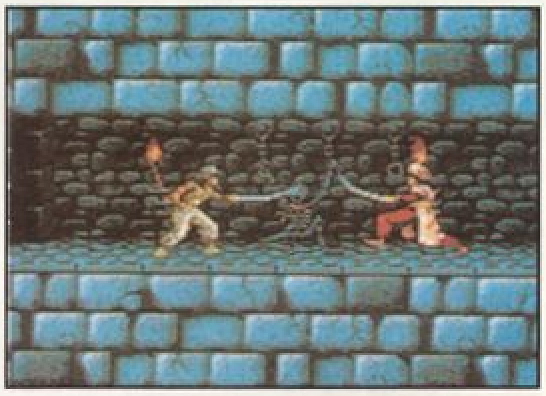
The storyline of the new Addams Family game follows the humorous antics of these morbid eccentrics. Assuming the role of family lawyer Tully Alford, you attempt to find the family vault through more than thirty booby-trapped rooms, tunnels and mazes contained in the Addams' gloomy Victorian mansion. Along the way, you'll encounter Gomez, Morticia, Uncle Fester, Pugsley, Wednesday, Grandma, Lurch, Thing and a whole host of squeamish surprises.

"Compact disc allows us to offer cutting-edge games that are more realistic and challenging to play," says Ken Wirt, General Manager of the Home Entertainment Division at NEC. "We think CD video games will pave the way for new types of home entertainment. Gamers will feel like they're starring in their own movie."



More tales of Arabia





Already a tremendous success on the IBM PC and Amiga courtesy of Domark, Broderbund's Prince of Persia is now enchanting Gameboy and Super Famicom players. If you've led a sheltered life, fear not, it's not too late to sample the fantastic graphics and incredible playability of this outstanding platform romp.

During the game, you have only sixty minutes to escape the palace dungeons and rescue a fair princess from the clutches of that nasty tyrant Jaffar. Do you possess the right joystick waggling skills to slash and dash your way past the twelve levels packed with palace guards, deadly trap doors and collapsing ceilings?

Author Jordan Mechner, a psychology graduate at Yale University in North America, originally used video footage of his younger brother prancing round his apartment like Errol Flynn. This film was digitised and transformed into the extraordinary animation which make this game a cut above the rest.

Thankfully, Prince of Persia has been successfully transferred over to the two Nintendo consoles. Obviously the NCS Super Famicom outing sports improved graphics, but, more importantly, superior music and sound effects now accompany your swashbuckling Far Eastern adventures.

More amazingly, Virgin Games has managed to retain some fluid and realistic animation in the remarkable Gameboy adaption.

Special thanks to Famicom Tsushin and LOGIN in Japan.

START SAVING NOW...

Yes, it's official. Nintendo is finally going to launch the Super NES in this country before the end of spring. Hurrah!

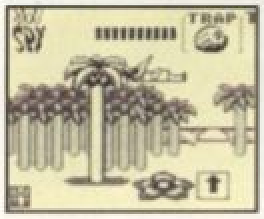
This super console has been satisfying the playing lusts of Japs and Yanks in their millions. Presently, desperate Brits make do with grey imported machines with makeshift leads and guarantees.

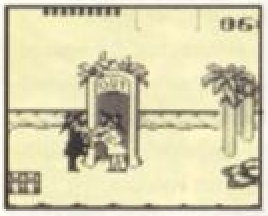
Nintendo's redesigned boxy version of the original Super Famicom should cost around £150 and come with Super Mario World, one of the best video games ever made. Other excellent titles like F-Zero, Zelda III, Populous, Super Ghouls 'n Ghosts, The Simpsons, SimCity, Gradius III and Super R-Type should be around at the same time.

Despite a pitifully slow microprocessor that is frequently seen trying to catch up with the rest of the smart hardware, Super NES has an edge over the rival Sega Megadrive in terms of graphics and sound output.

Could we see a £99 Megadrive next year, then? Nobody at Sega, not even the sandwich girl, was willing to comment. Then again, the Megadrive is available today with a greater selection of games. Sega is also preparing a European version of the Mega-CD, an attractive black box of audio visual wizardry which could shift the balance back in Sega's favour.

IT'S A MAD WORLD





Gamesters with long memories should be glad to hear First Star Software and Kemco have converted the critically-acclaimed Spy vs Spy onto Gameboy.

Those crazy cartoon spies from MAD magazine spring into action as they try any dirty trick to steal the secrets in this highly inventive game, first released on the C64 back in 1985.

Furthermore, Spy vs Spy is such an utterly brilliant two-player game that a duo-link was one of the first options to be incorporated into this thrilling one-megabit cart.

The whole affair is packed full of ingenious booby traps and slapstick gags. It certainly makes a refreshing change from all those unoriginal Tetris clones which refuse to go away.

Hulk Hogan hits the arcades

World Wrestling Federation's rollercoaster product range has made another move into the competitive video games arena.

Following the various best-selling computer and console titles from Acclaim and Ocean, Tecmo and Technos have devised a colourful coin-op based around the trendy sport seen on satellite TV. No doubt their interpretation will be converted onto home formats if the success of previous games are anything to go by.

WWF Wrestlefest features the American wrestling heroes and villains beloved by thousands of fans around the world. Punters get the chance to play their favourites such as Ted Dibiase, Jake 'The Snake' Roberts, Sgt. Slaughter and, of course, the most famous fighter of all, Hulk Hogan. It's fun filled muscular mayhem all the way assures a hyperactive spokesperson.

Bet the likes of old timers Giant haystacks and Big Daddy are fuming with envy...

HAVE YOURSELF A SCOOBY SNACK

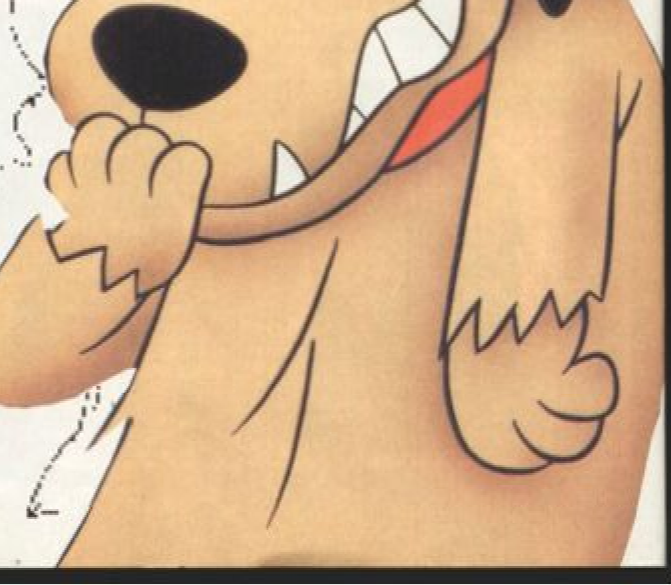
Top animator Hanna-Barbera and electronic giant Philips have teamed up in an effort to inject more spice into the rather dull collection of CDi (Compact Disc Interactive) software currently out in the USA and Japan.

The marvellous creative partnership of Hanna-Barbera were responsible for ageless cartoon classics like Tom & Jerry, The Flintstones, Top Cat, Hong Kong Phooey, Yogi Bear, Wacky Races, Huckleberry Hound and, the personal ACE favourite, Scooby Doo.

Set to invade these shores by the summer, CDi equipment from the likes of Philips, Sony and Matsushita looks similar to an ordinary CD-player but plugs into your TV to provide the family with exciting new ways to be educated and entertained.

Hanna-Barbera claims its premier CDi production, Happy Birthday to Me, will be the world's first interactive full motion video to follow the recently agreed Moving Pictures Experts Group (MPEG) standard. This will hopefully reproduce images and sounds just like those seen during ordinary TV transmissions. Instead of just watching, you'll be able to change events with your remote controller. Cor! More CDi titles from Hanna-Barbera are expected to follow.

As previously reported in ACE, American Interactive Media, part of the huge Philips empire, is additionally transforming the sensational Super Mario Bros and Legend of Zelda video games over from more traditional Nintendo consoles.



its

ster prod-
the com-

puter and
n, Tecmo
l coin-op
n satellite
converted
previous

American
thousands
he chance
biase, Jake.
of course,
logan. It's
y assures

tacks and

Ultima® VII

THE BLACK GATE™

THE GREATEST ROLE-PLAYING ADVENTURE SAGA OF ALL TAKES ON AN UNBELIEVABLE NEW DIMENSION!

Ultima VII makes another giant technological leap forward. Harnessing the full extra power of the latest generation PC's, the Ultima world literally takes on an extra dimension, with a completely new full screen VGA graphic environment which brings fantastically realistic close-up views of the game-play as it develops.

Instead of watching this amazing interactive story unfold through a small window, now you are *in* Britannia! Absorbing the atmosphere. *Feeling* the pressure. Actually *hearing* the characters speak. Controlling your every move and those of your companions, in a unique, mouse-driven environment.

System Requirements:
IBM-PC or 100% compatible 386SX, 386 or 486
Hard Disk, High Density 5.25" or 3.5" disk drive
2MB Memory
VGA/MCGA colour monitor
Keyboard and/or mouse
AdLib, Roland MT-32/LAPC-1, CMS Soundblaster Sound Card*
*Required for speech.

ORIGIN™
We create worlds™

For more information, or the name of your local dealer,
contact: Mindscape International Ltd.,
The Coach House, Hooklands Estate, Scaynes Hill,
W Sussex RH17 7NG. Tel: 0444 831 761

Distributed by
MINDSCAPE
INTERNATIONAL

A RARE DEAL

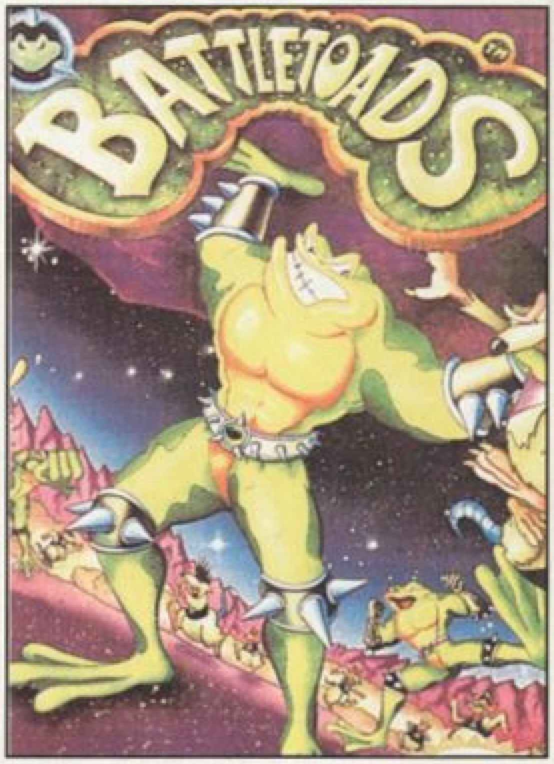
Feeling exceedingly pleased with themselves, and rightly so too, the rich people at Mindscape have snapped up the home computer conversion rights to the hottest Nintendo game in the States.

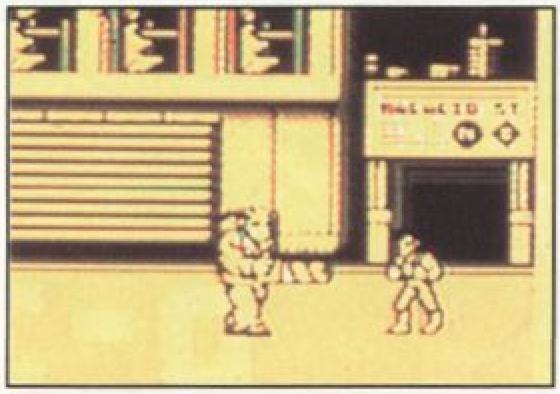
Like those over-hyped Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles before them, Battletoads are already a cult phenomenon on the other side of the pond.

Published by Tradewest of Texas, this toadally awesome action game is currently available on NES and Gameboy. It tells the story of Zitz, Rash and Pimple in their intergalactic struggle against the evil, but rather slinky, Dark Queen. Battletoads should debut shortly on Super NES, Megadrive and coin-op systems. An inevitable sequel is also on the cards.

Ignoring all this American adulation for a moment, Battletoads is, in fact, another British masterpiece. The binary boffins at Rare first claimed their place in the great hi-score table of history with classic releases like Jetpac, Knightlore and Sabre Wulfe on the Sinclair Spectrum. Suddenly, before anybody had even heard of Nintendo or Super Mario Bros, they switched to console development and made an absolute fortune.

Mindscape expects the micro versions of Battletoads will be ready in time for the rush next Christmas. By then we'll probably have the associated toys, action figures, dedicated electronic games, Marvel comic books and animated TV show coming out of our ears.





Out break of violence

Bloodthirsty Gameboy owners will be able to bash their everyday frustrations out on one of the most violent beat'em-ups ever released on their machine.

Acclaim, producer of The Simpsons and Terminator 2 on Nintendo, is offering Double Dragon II: The Revenge for your playing pleasure. Fans of the first game and newcomers will flip over the moves, gameplay and graphics reckons a spokesperson for the Oyster Bay company in bustling New York.

Billy Lee has been accused of eliminating another member of the Scorpion martial arts club. It's a frame up. Thus, Billy and twin-brother Jimmy must venture through the scrolling asphalt jungle to prove his innocence.

This all translates into thirteen levels of non-stop close combat on a grand scale. Needless to say, there are still plenty of baseball bats ready to be swung in anger and dodgy whip-carrying Amazons to avoid. Will the Mohawk warriors rule the roost or can you help save the day?

Just in case Megadrive gameplayers are feeling left out, there's no need to fret, Pal Soft in Japan is thinking of you. Double Dragon II is now available on your machine, too.

Megatastic conversions on their way ...

We're very proud to announce Imageworks' bodacious Megalomania arcade strategy game is coming soon to Megadrive, IBM PC and, wait for it, CDTV. Yes, the 'machine of the future' are finally going to have something to get its teeth into. There is life beyond Lemmings and Psycho Killer after all.

Megalomania quickly forgets its roots in games like Powermonger and gets down to the serious business of being immense fun to play. It's a mix of many styles enlivened by some of the best sampled speech yet heard in a computer game.

Megadrive players are in for a double treat because their adaption of Megalomania contains a few slight enhancements, mainly in the graphics department. You can also hear all the terrific sound effects at the beginning of the game. An influence of Japanese games design, perhaps? Creator Sensible Software has promised to fiddle with the joypad control so you won't miss the accuracy of a mouse.

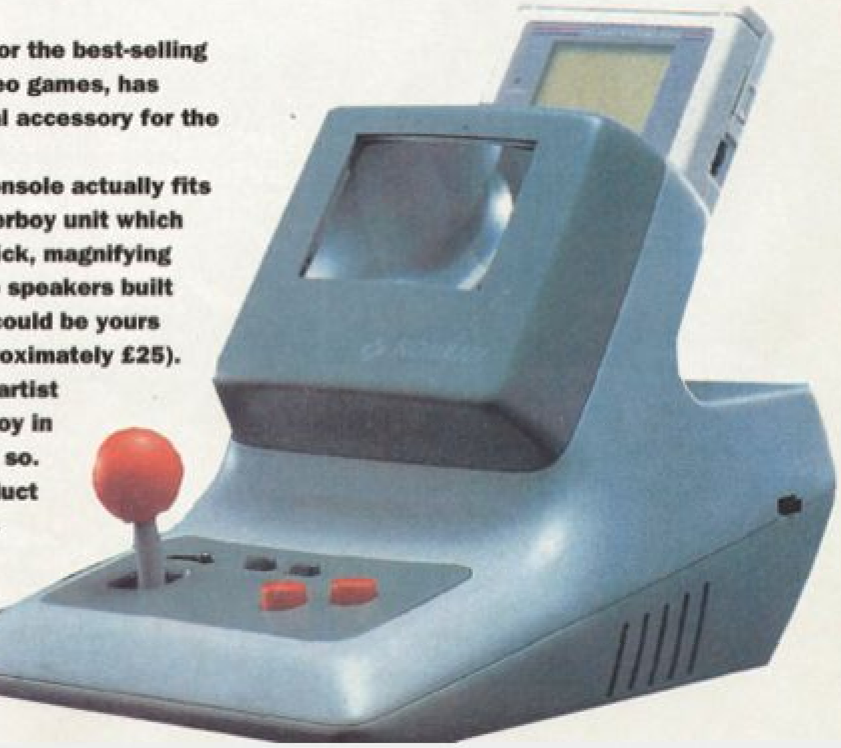
Finally, Imageworks has a datadisk for the Amiga and Atari ST copies of Megalomania in the pipeline along with a completely new sequel.

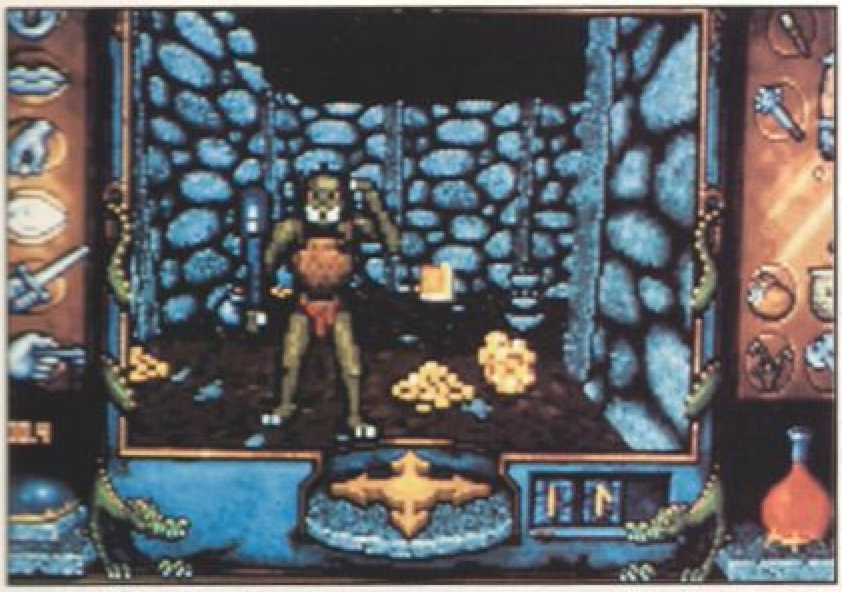
WHAT A WONDERFUL WIDGET !

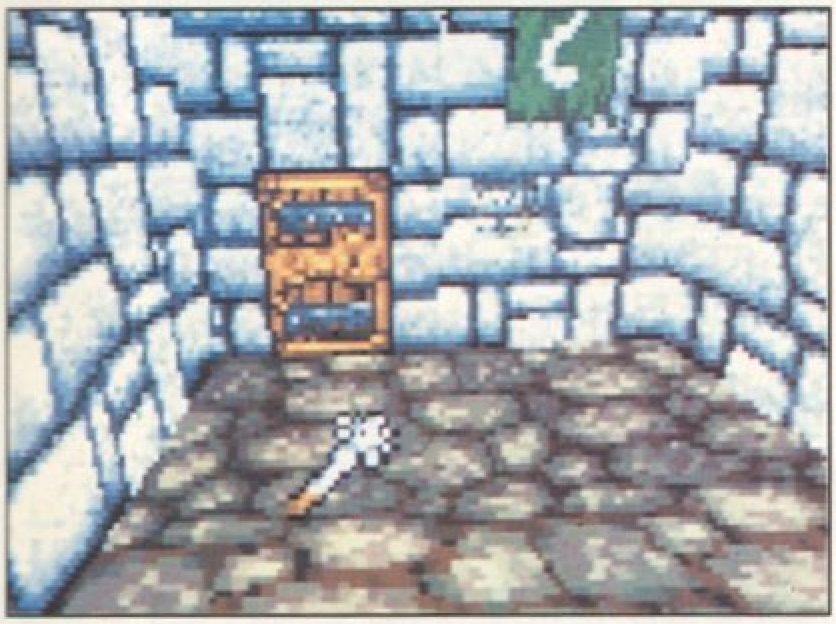
Konami, better known for the best-selling Turtles and Gradius video games, has unveiled a most unusual accessory for the Gameboy in Japan.

The sleek handheld console actually fits inside the desktop Hyperboy unit which comes with a grip joystick, magnifying glass and pair of stereo speakers built in. This dreamy device could be yours for a mere ¥5,800 (approximately £25).

Any good grey import artist should have the Hyperboy in stock within a month or so. Notice the cunning product placement for Konami's Nemesis II title in the advert. Those sneaky marketeers strike again, eh?







GOING UNDERGROUND

In a bid to outdo the rival Eye of the Beholder series, Origin has decided to concoct its own variant of the smash hit Dungeon Master. Sadly, only PC players can join this deep adventure.

Ultima Underworld: The Stysian Abyss again uses the fantasy setting of Britannia. Only this time, the programmers have employed the 3D graphics technology first seen in the award-winning Wing Commander!

"Ultima Underworld follows the style of the immensely popular Eye of the Beholder and Dungeon Master, but with substantial advances in technology and gameplay," maintains a spokesperson, "Its virtual environment envelops you in the richly detailed sights and sounds that players expect of the Ultima experience."

By the way, there are apparently over 24 miles of corridors and rooms to explore. Luckily, Origin supplies an innovate automapping capability to stop you getting lost.

On the other side of the world, Super Famicom adventurers are currently sampling the delights of Ultima VI. Pony Canyon was in charge of the conversion. Unless you can instantaneously translate Japanese, we recommend you wait for the English cartridge. Still, there's no harm in looking at the pretty graphics or wiping the floor of gargoyles and other such creatures is there?

All hands on deck

After an exceptionally slow start, the Lynx colour handheld console is starting to, ahem, pick up. Not only do personalities like Gazza, The Farm and Chesney Hawkes regularly switch onto the charms of Blue Lightning, California Games and the other forty or so titles, but Atari is promising to launch five new Lynx games every month for at least a year. If this staggering schedule can be adhered to with decent product, this could make the Lynx a serious rival to the Nintendo Gameboy and Sega Gamegear.

According to the Slough-based hardware firm, there are about 150,000 Lynx's in this country. Interestingly, Atari's market research suggests people buy around five games within the first three months of purchasing the console itself. Hey, that figure sounds familiar, right?

Using a development system based around the Amiga, there are more than sixty titles currently being devised in Britain and the USA. Many developers actually transfer their sprite graphics directly over from the Amiga and scale them down. After all, the Lynx was designed by the same team that invented the Amiga.

Lynx boasts a more impressive hardware specification than the Japanese competition. For starters its microprocessor is a lot faster, the crisp LCD screen displays far more colours, and a virtually unlimited number of sprites can be stretched and titled like an arcade machine. In some ways, the Lynx even outperforms the Amiga, Megadrive and Super Famicom.

At the end of the day, it's the quality and quantity of software that really counts. And that's where the Lynx has been badly let down in the past. Atari needs a high profile video game like Super Mario Bros or Sonic the Hedgehog to make the big time. Unfortunately, there's still no sign of such a release.

Nevertheless, Atari has managed to attract neat games like Shadow of the Beast, Lemmings, Manchester United Europe, Switchblade II, Daemonsgate, 720°, Rampart, Ninja Gaiden III and a whole host of original carts.

Eye of the Beholder is likely to be one of the biggest conversions over to the Lynx this year. Programmed by NuFX in the States, up to four players will be able to simultaneously wander through the dark monster-filled dungeons in this four megabit cartridge. Eye of the Beholder could also be the first Lynx title to come with a battery-backed option to save your current game position.

Things are definitively looking up for the Lynx fraternity, if only Atari can persuade Graham Gooch and Phillip Schofield to ditch their Gamegears...

VOTE AND WIN!

Yes, it's that time of year again. The time when the glitterati of the software business gather in the bustling heart of London's West End, all waiting with baited breath to see if their games have won a place in the heart of ACE readers.

Yes, it's time again for the gamesplaying gongs known as the Golden Joystick Awards to be doled out to eternally grateful software supremos.

But unlike all the other awards ceremonies around at this time of year, the Golden Joysticks are the only awards decided entirely by your votes, and not by some poncey businessmen without the first clue what games are all about. Which is why, obviously enough, that we're requesting your forms nice and early.

Now, remember that voting is an important business, and isn't a responsibility to be taken lightly. The industry take your votes as a strong signal of what you like and don't like about their software. So, if hundreds of thousands of votes come in saying that Mr Crappy's Uphill Chase is the best game ever, you can be pretty certain that every software house in Britain will be launching their own interpretation of the theme by next Christmas.

So don't go squandering your votes, or you'll only have yourself to blame for the consequences.

Quite aside from the chance to benefit the software industry and the buying public as a whole, the advent of the Joysticks offers you another golden (ho ho) opportunity. The opportunity to walk away with £500 of free software.

One voting form from a collective pool of entries from all Emap Images Magazines (Mean Machines, Computer and Video Games, CU Amiga, Sinclair User, The Two The Ones, PC Review and Megatech) will be drawn at the Joystick ceremony and the sender of the form will win the prize.

There are only two few conditions which you need to remember when voting:

1. All voting forms must be posted by Friday 12th March. After this date no votes will be accepted.

2. Games eligible for nomination must have been released between January 1st 1991 and December 31st 1991.

And it's as simple as that. So, fill in the coupon, cut it out and send it off.

Name: ....

Address: ....

....

1. Best Graphics - 8 Bit ....

2. Best Graphics - 16 Bit ....

3. Best Soundtrack - 8 Bit ....

4. Best Soundtrack - 16 Bit ....

5. Best Simulation - 8 Bit..............................

6. Best Simulation - 16 Bit..............................

7. Best Coin-Op Conversion - 8 Bit ....

8. Best Coin-Op Conversion - 16 Bit ....

9. Console Game of the Year - 8 Bit ....

10. Console game of the Year - 16 Bit..............................

11. PC Game of the Year..............................

12. 8 Bit Game of the Year..............................

13. 16 Bit Game of the Year..............................

14. Programming Team of the Year..............................

15. Hardware Manufacturer of the Year..............................

16. Software House of the Year ....

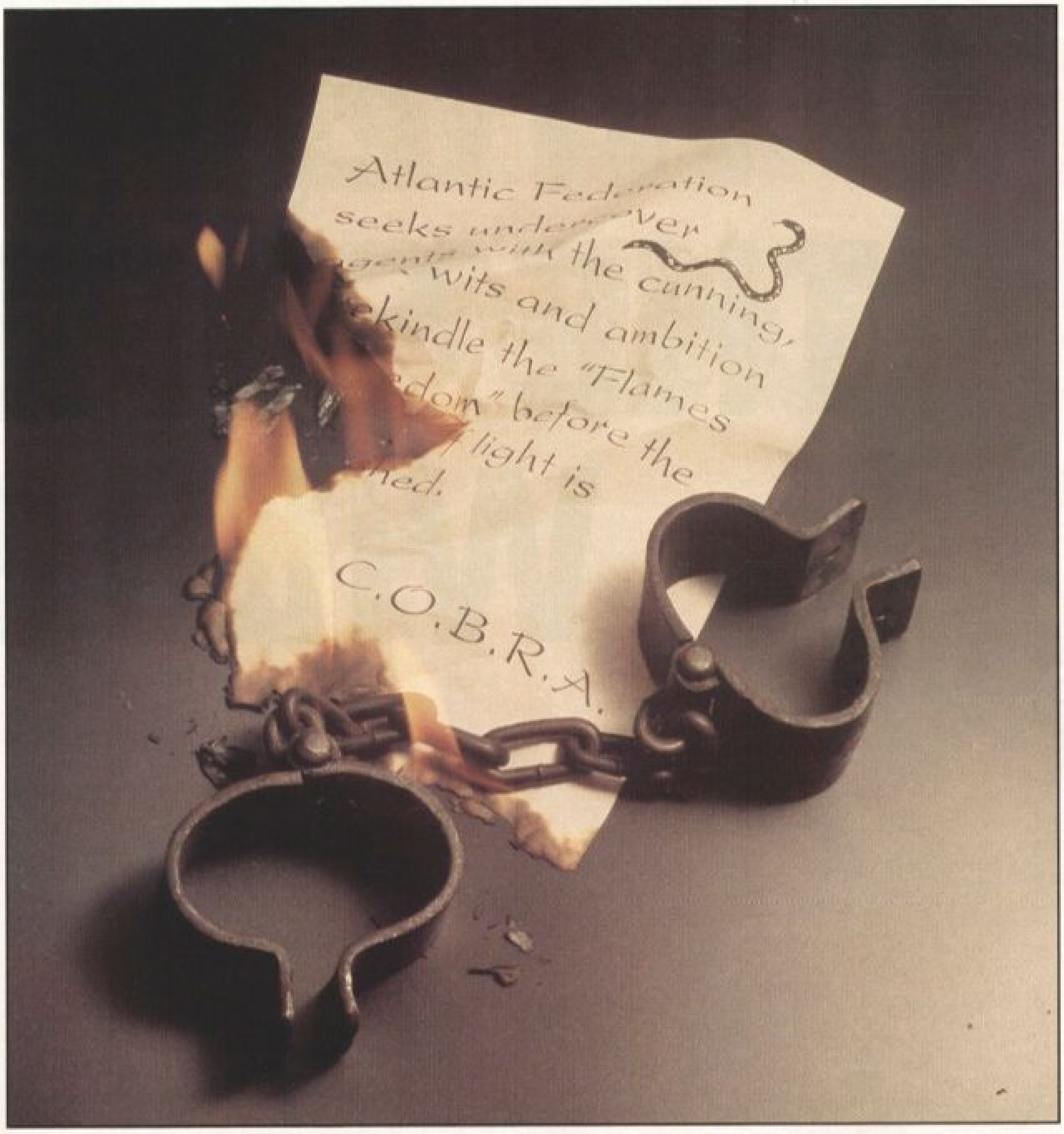
17. Worst Game of the Year..............................

GOLDEN JOYSTICKS GOLDEN JOYSTICKS 1991 Awards

send your entries to:

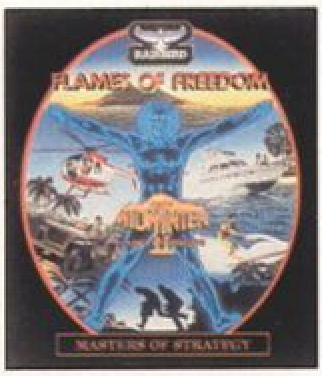
THE GOLDEN JOYSTICKS AWARDS
ACE, Priory Court,
30-32 Farringdon
Lane, Farringdon
London, EC1 3AU

Spark a flame of freedom


Atlantic Fed...ation
seeks under...ver
...gents with the cunning,
...wits and ambition
...ekindle the "Flames
...edom" before the
...flight is
...hed.
C.O.B.R.A.

into a wildfire of revolution.

MICROPROSE™
SIMULATION • SOFTWARE


RAINBIRD
FLAMES OF FREEDOM
MIDWINTER II
MASTERS OF STRATEGY

Flames of Freedom, for IBM PC compatibles, Commodore Amiga, and Atari ST.
MicroProse Ltd, Unit 1, Hampton Road Industrial Estate, Tetbury, Glos.
GL8 8DA. Tél: 0666 504 326.

SO WHEN DO
THE SUPER
WILL BE

DOYOU RECKON
ERNINTENDO
BEHERE?

UPER NINTENDO
X
A
Y
B

Letters

My, what a bulging sack we had this month! We were quite concerned that unless it was emptied, it might burst! Indeed, so many and varied were your opinions that we've had to knock a page off News in order to fit them all in the issue. But let's face it, it's well worth it, since it's your views that fuel this ker-razy old industry of ours.

The address to send your letters to is: ACE Magazine, Emap Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Remember to mark your envelope 'Letters' or they will end up in our cheque-sorting operation on the moon, or something.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Oh, do keep a lid on it, can't you? I've read ACE for years and have always viewed it to be one of the best magazines around. But now I worry that my favourite games read is becoming an impenetrable mass of clichés and references to all manner of rubbish apart from the things you're actually supposed to be writing about; games (remember them?).

Your last issue (52) was a particularly bad offender. Jim Douglas is probably the worst offender of all, ranting on about how good The Water Margin was. Quite aside from the fact that it wasn't any bloody good, who cares? What possible relevance has this got to the game being reviewed (First Samurai)? And he's at it again in the Another World review, spouting on about French comic books! Get a grip, you're going soft in the head! If I want to know about French comic book art, I'll go to the bloody Arch de Triumph, or whatever it's called.

Now, far be it from me to lecture you chaps on how to put a magazine together. You obviously know better than me, but it does rather seem like you all want to be writing for some poncey mag like GQ or something. Well you're not, are you?

And if I sound as if I'm slagging you off, I'm sorry. It's just that I can't see the point of all this extra information. It's games I'm interested in, not old TV shows and comics.

Darren Smith
Highbury
London

DISKTASTIC

You must be mad! I've just read your response to the letter by Alex Knockholt in the last issue. I think he made some very good points about the benefits of magazines carrying front-cover disks.

While I agree with you about the quality of lots of magazines taking the mickey out of their readers by slapping a disk on the front and allowing the magazine to become rubbish, I don't think that would happen with ACE.

ACE is a good magazine and looks really nice. So there's no reason for ACE to become rubbish with a disk because it is so good now, a disk would just make it better.

That is unless you are scared that you can't produce disks as good as everyone else, but ACE could kick anyone's butt in a disk fight, I'm sure.

It's bonkers for ACE trying to sell more than other mags when they have a disk on, so do one and you will be No.1!

Erik Svenson
The Netherlands

BOSS FANS!

Thank you, ACE, for your free Software Boss game. Myself and the little woman have had many a happy hour over the Christmas period taking the roles of the bosses of our favourite games companies. I take the role of Anil, because I admire his business sense, but my wife likes to be Stewpot, because she thinks he's cute.

Although the game is excellent, I have a couple of suggestions which would make it even better.

1. It would have been nice to have a lady from a software house represented. How about the dishy Nadia from Storm or Jo Cooke from Ocean? They could have had little blouses on instead of the gents' shirts and ties.

2. I think going back to the Start just because you land on the Friday 13th square is a bit unfair. I lost the game to my wife because of this feature, despite having a good idea for my game and CTW writing a nice story about me.

3. I also think that while the majority of things are true to the madcap things which can happen in this exciting and vibrant industry, it's improbable that a software house's office would fall off a cliff and be hit by lightning at the same time.

My own version of the game has been amended with different penalties for landing on these squares. I'm interested in swapping my own custom Day to Day tables with other readers who have drawn up their own. Anybody interested?

Mark Phillips
Neptune

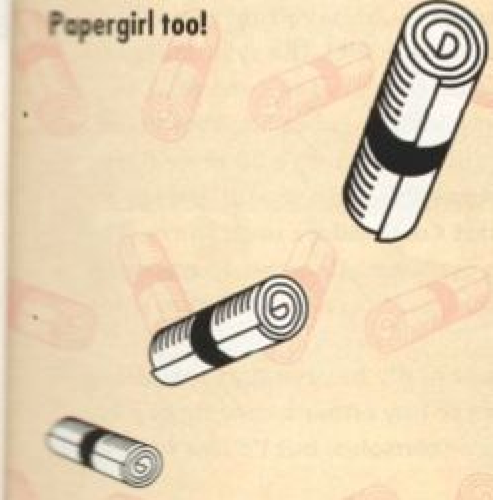
THE MORAL MINORITY

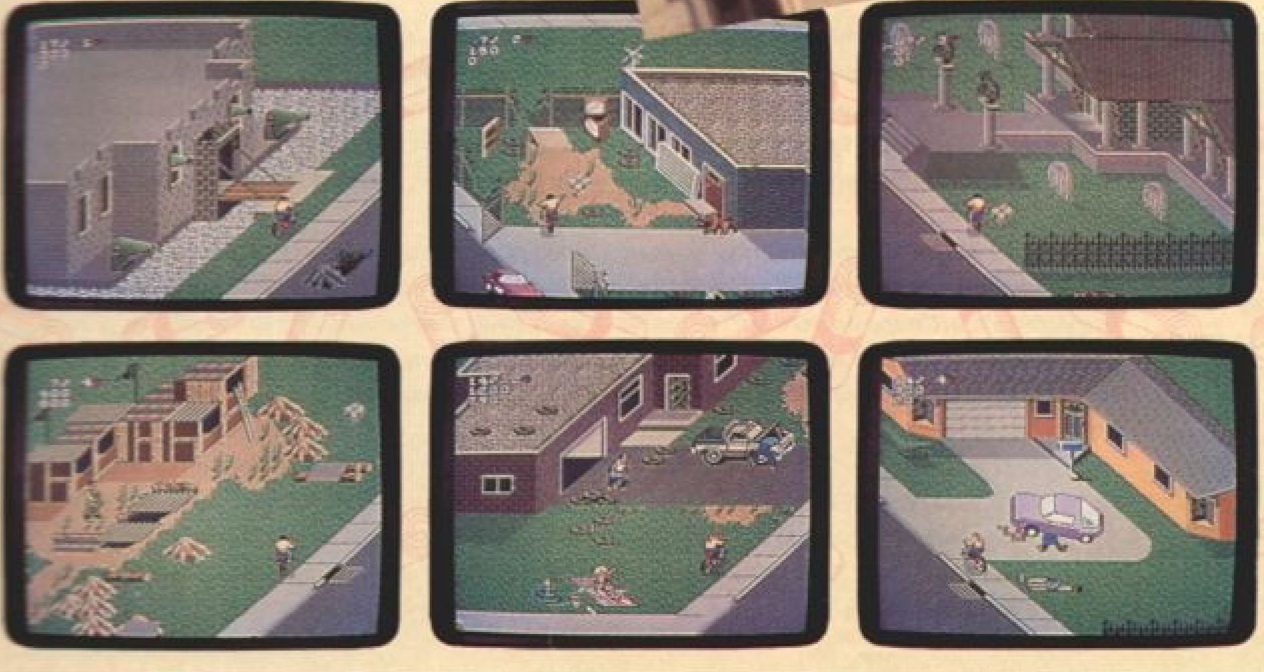
Sir, I am sure that I am not alone in growing concerned at the increasing levels of 'adult'

Look out - he's back!

PAPERBOY 2

No window is safe. No fence is too high. The paperboy is determined to deliver the paper to his subscribers any way he can. Tossing papers left and right, riding in three directions, jumping anything, this free-wheeling carrier visits more neighbourhoods and houses, faces more targets and obstacles, in more vivid colours than ever before.
Plus, rad stunt riding and BMX tracks in bonus rounds. Choose to ride as either Paperboy or Papergirl too!





Copyright 1991 Tengen Inc.
Paperboy 2 is a trademark of Tengen Inc.
All rights reserved

MINDSCAPE

For your local dealer, contact **Mindscape International Ltd,** The Coach House, Hooklands Estate, Scaynes Hill, West Sussex RH17 7NG. Tel: 0444 831 761

material and themes present in today's computer software. Quite aside from the levels of graphic violence shown with sprites and digitised actors suffering all manner of awful things, the overall premise of so many of today's games is just so... unsavoury.

I'm no prude, but I find the constant barrage of images of lycanthropy (the cover of issue 52, no less), ritual slaughter and soldiers of fortune more than a little disturbing, especially since there are no laws governing the game's purchase. Any easily-influenced young child may be in some way affected by continual and prolonged exposure to violent games devoid of any moral guidance. And simply because no studies actually suggest that is the case, it doesn't mean that it's not.

After all, plenty of people died of cancer because nobody had attributed the disease to smoking until it was too late, so why should we close our minds to the damaging effects of evil images, simply because there's no tangible evidence - yet. Let's act before it's too late.

Thomas Whitcombe
Portsmouth

COIN-OP SCANDAL!

What is wrong with whoever runs these big software firms? Why do they think that I want to own a conversion of all these coin-ops? I don't! If I want to play a shoot-'em-up, or a racing game or an airplane blast, I can go to the arcade and play them, and enjoy far superior graphics, better sound and whizz-bang extras like moving cabinets and 3D vision, all for about £1 for a go on a really great machine.

And these people are asking me to spend £25 on a crappy version of the game with none of the excitement of the arcade version.

Have they got their maths wrong or something? For a start, who wants to play an arcade game twenty-five times? I bloody don't.

So let's get this straight, these so-called software companies are asking us to pay the same amount of money for the privalege of playing their inferior version in our own homes as we would normally pay for a completely unrealistic amount of goes on a coin-op. If you ask me, it's a bloody con.

So I'm asking you, ACE, as the champion of all that is good about games to do something about this farce and make softcos realise that it just isn't good enough anymore.

Nigel Ravens
Stockport
Near Liverpool

DEEP THOUGHT

PRIZE LETTER
PRIZE LETTER

I have thought a lot about the Amiga's future recently, and I've come to the conclusion that Commodore should release a console version of the Amiga. Maybe they aren't so keen on that after the horrible failure of the C64GS, but I believe that the reasons for releasing it are good and many.

First, the piracy is a problem. This would be partly solved by making the games on cartridge, as they are much harder to copy. The cartridge also has other advantages, such as no (?) loading time and greater storage capacity. Just think of playing the Dragon's Lair type games without having to wait for the graphics to load all the time. The Sierra type of games would also benefit from cartridge with all their disks and extremely long loading times. Owners of 'real' Amigas would probably buy cartidges too, if the price was about the same. How much does it cost to make a game on cartridge anyway?

Second, many young people just want a games machine, not a computer, so why not give them what they want? The Amiga has a huge amount of great games and these could be re-released on compilation cartridges. This would make the Amiga a serious competitor to the Megadrive and the Super Famicom in both the American and the Japanese markets too!

Thirdly, as the Amiga console would be without a keyboard or disc drive, I think the system would be quite cheap. Preferably the system should have four joystick or joypad ports (for Kick Off 2, etc) and a link-up cable (for Lotus 2, etc). The system should have some kind of mouse since many games are based on that kind of control. A keypad should be made optional for use with the more complicated games like flight sims.

Lastly, the system must of course have a socket for connecting a CD drive (Commodore's own A690, perhaps) which would make it compatible with the CDTV.

I really think this system could be a winner, but Commodore must hurry. The Megadrive and Super Famicom are already selling like mad. And they must remember to make the system so that it fits into the American market. After all, the Amiga is big in Europe as a games machine but not anywhere else.

I'd like to have some debate over this topic, as I really believe that the piracy is destroying the Amiga market and that we'll soon have to buy either a console or a PC. This doesn't mean that I have anything against the PCs or consoles, but I'd like to keep my Amiga as I think it's a great machine.

What does ACE think of all this?

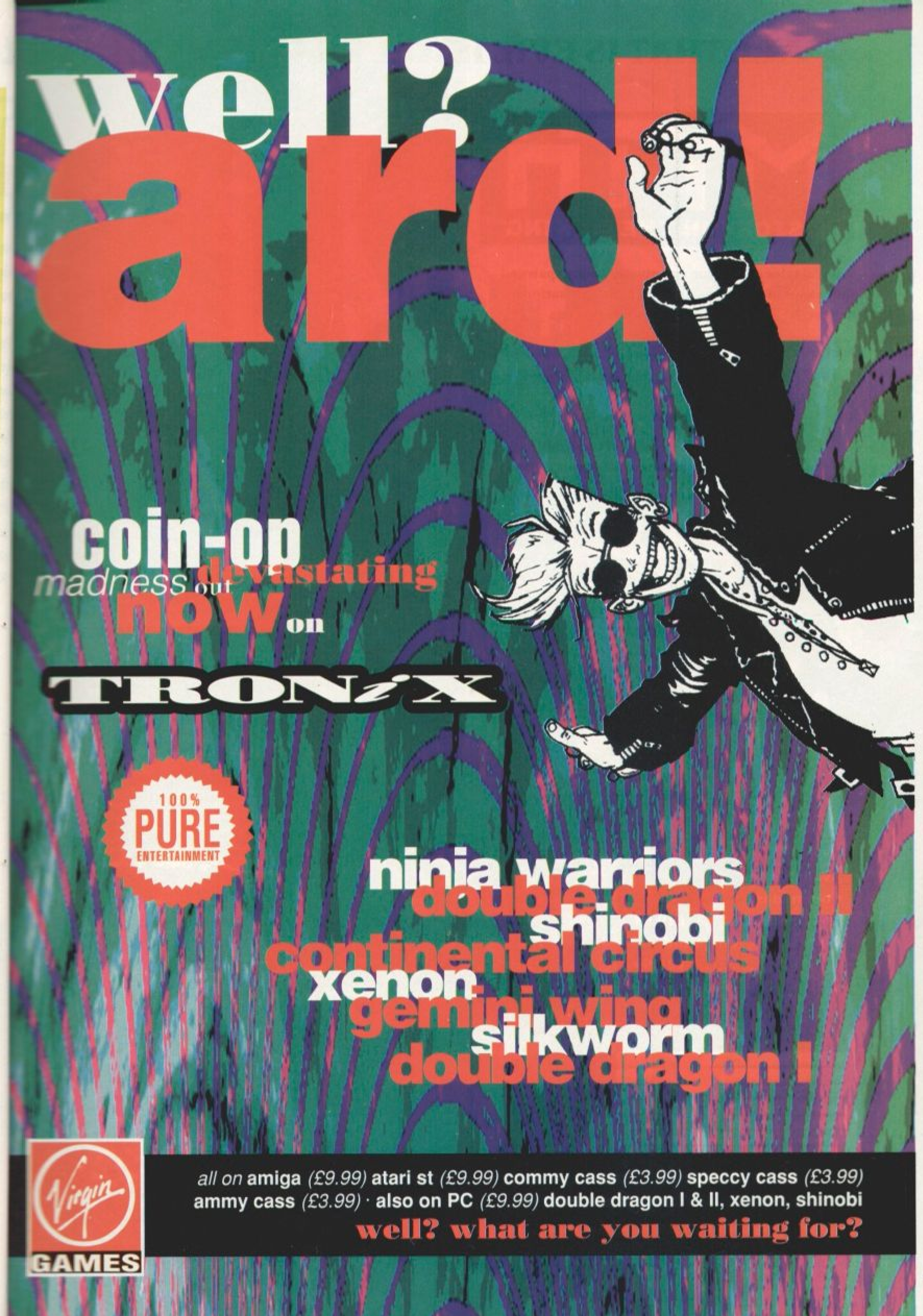
Knut Erik Røtne
Harpefoss
Norway

Hmmm, interesting. Most of your points we agree with, though you seem to be rather optimistic about the memory capacity of the cartridges. Most of the Megadrive/SNES cartridges you can get are 4 Mbits (512K) or 8 Mbits (1 Mb) in size. Given that a typical Sierra or Lucasfilm game is well over 5Mb in size even when compacted, you'll appreciate that a cartridge version would be phenomally expensive, around five times the normal price.

In sprite-based scrolling games, this lack of memory is less important because the backgrounds are stored in memory-efficient block form (like a C64), as opposed to the Amiga's bitmapped screen. However, this format does make it a lot easier to create fast-moving vector-drawn graphics. Given that the two machines have very similar CPU speeds, compare the relative speeds of F-22 on the Megadrive and even the aging F-18 on the Amiga.

That aside, we can't help agreeing that with the right marketing and at the right price there's no reason for an Amiga console not to be a run-away success. And, of course, the memory problem would be solved in one fell swoop by a CD-ROM unit.

As Knut says, what do other readers think? And, more importantly, what's Commodore's stance on this?



well? ard!

coin-op madness out now on devastating

TRONiX

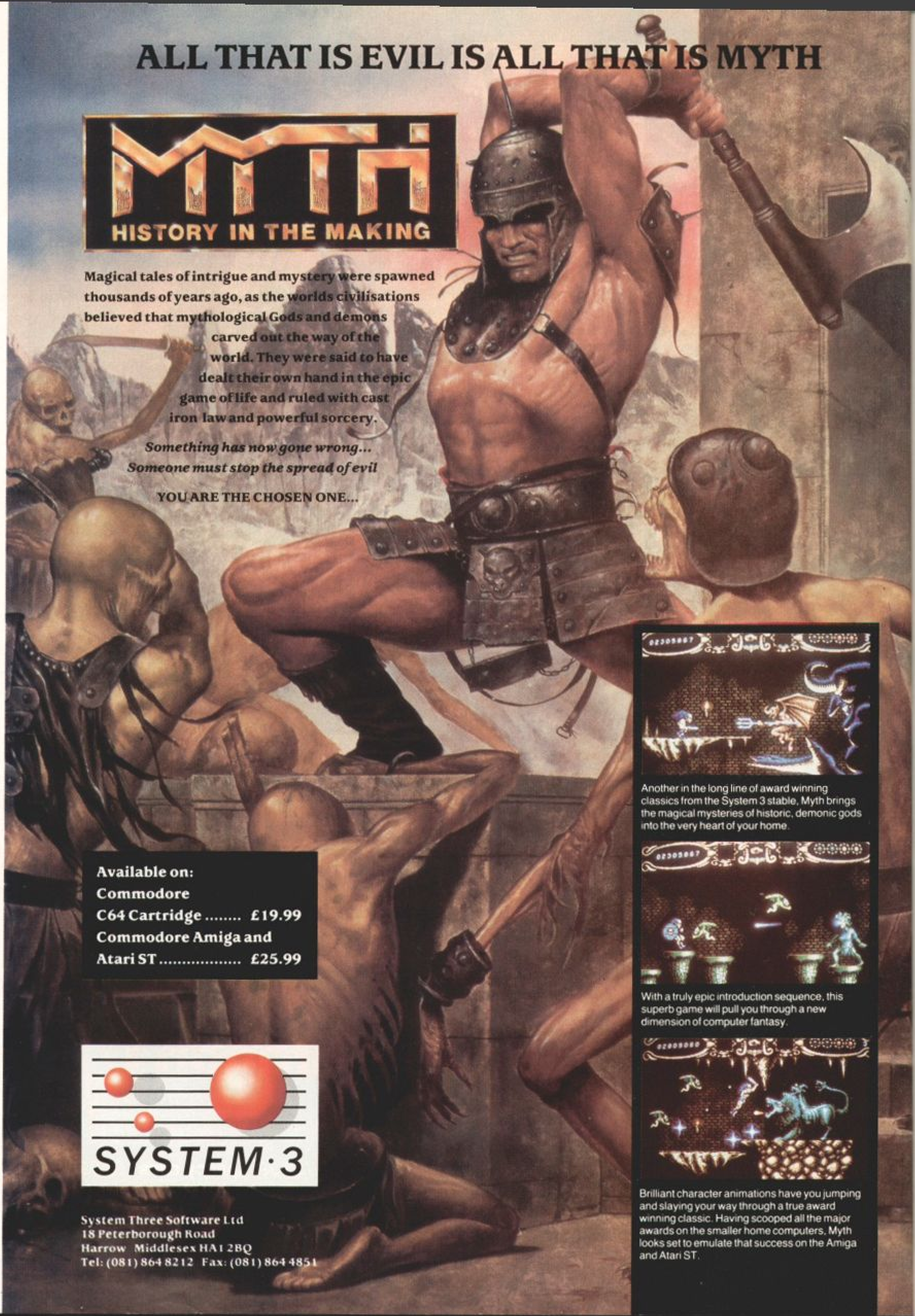
100% PURE ENTERTAINMENT

ninja warriors
double dragon II
shinobi
continental circus
xenon
gemini wing
silkworm
double dragon I

Virgin GAMES

all on amiga *(£9.99)* atari st *(£9.99)* commy cass *(£3.99)* speccy cass *(£3.99)* ammy cass *(£3.99)* · also on PC *(£9.99)* double dragon I & II, xenon, shinobi

well? what are you waiting for?



ALL THAT IS EVIL IS ALL THAT IS MYTH

MYTH

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Magical tales of intrigue and mystery were spawned thousands of years ago, as the worlds civilisations believed that mythological Gods and demons carved out the way of the world. They were said to have dealt their own hand in the epic game of life and ruled with cast iron law and powerful sorcery.

Something has now gone wrong...
Someone must stop the spread of evil

YOU ARE THE CHOSEN ONE...

Another in the long line of award winning classics from the System 3 stable, Myth brings the magical mysteries of historic, demonic gods into the very heart of your home.

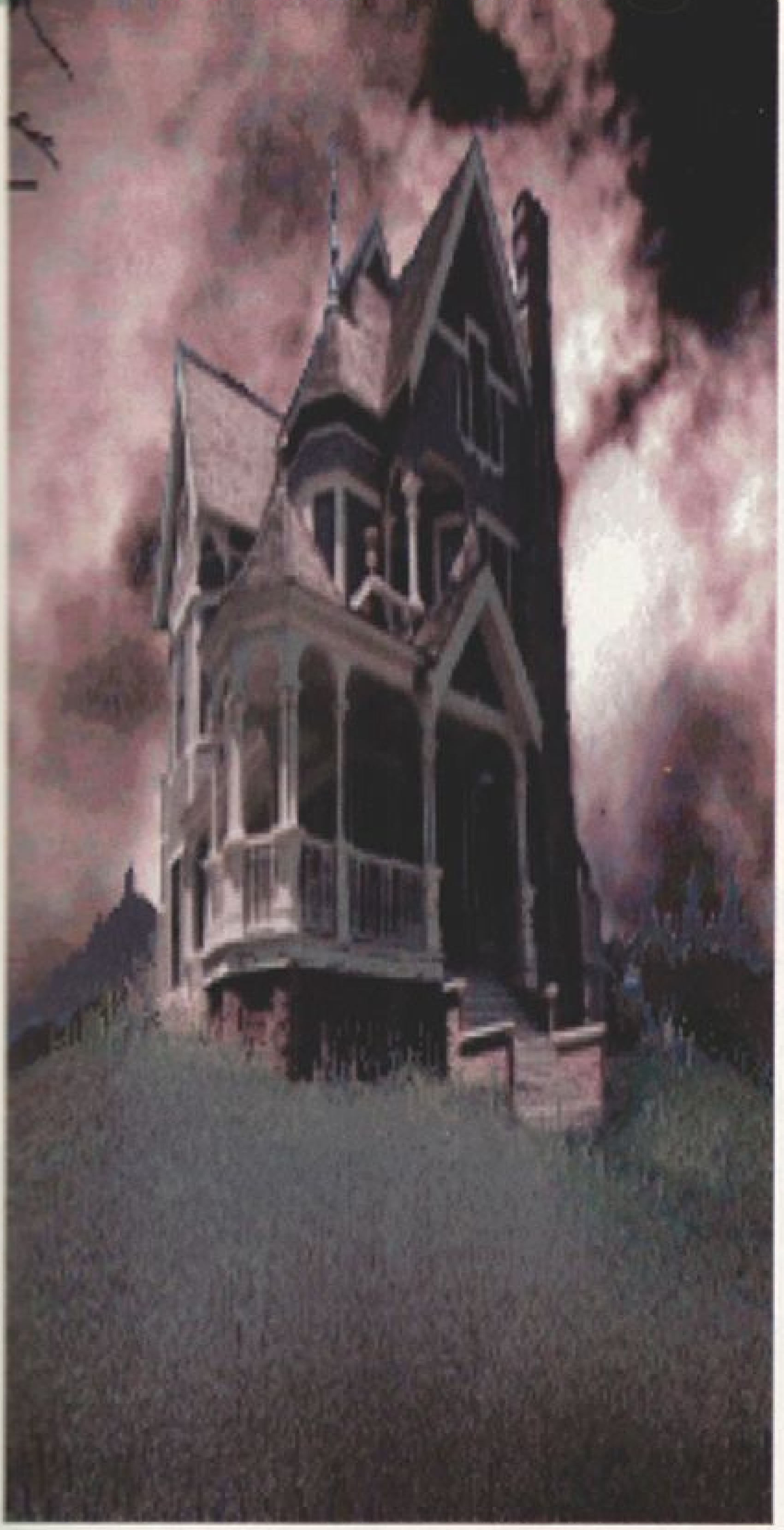
With a truly epic introduction sequence, this superb game will pull you through a new dimension of computer fantasy.

Brilliant character animations have you jumping and slaying your way through a true award winning classic. Having scooped all the major awards on the smaller home computers, Myth looks set to emulate that success on the Amiga and Atari ST.

Available on:
Commodore
C64 Cartridge £19.99
Commodore Amiga and
Atari ST £25.99

SYSTEM·3

System Three Software Ltd
18 Peterborough Road
Harrow Middlesex HA1 2BQ
Tel: (081) 864 8212 Fax: (081) 864 4851



LITTLE HOUSE ON THE SCARY

Can a computer game really scare you witless? American development team Trilobyte reckons its possible - and is currently pushing back the boundaries of PC programming to prove it. Get ready to quiver behind the sofa...

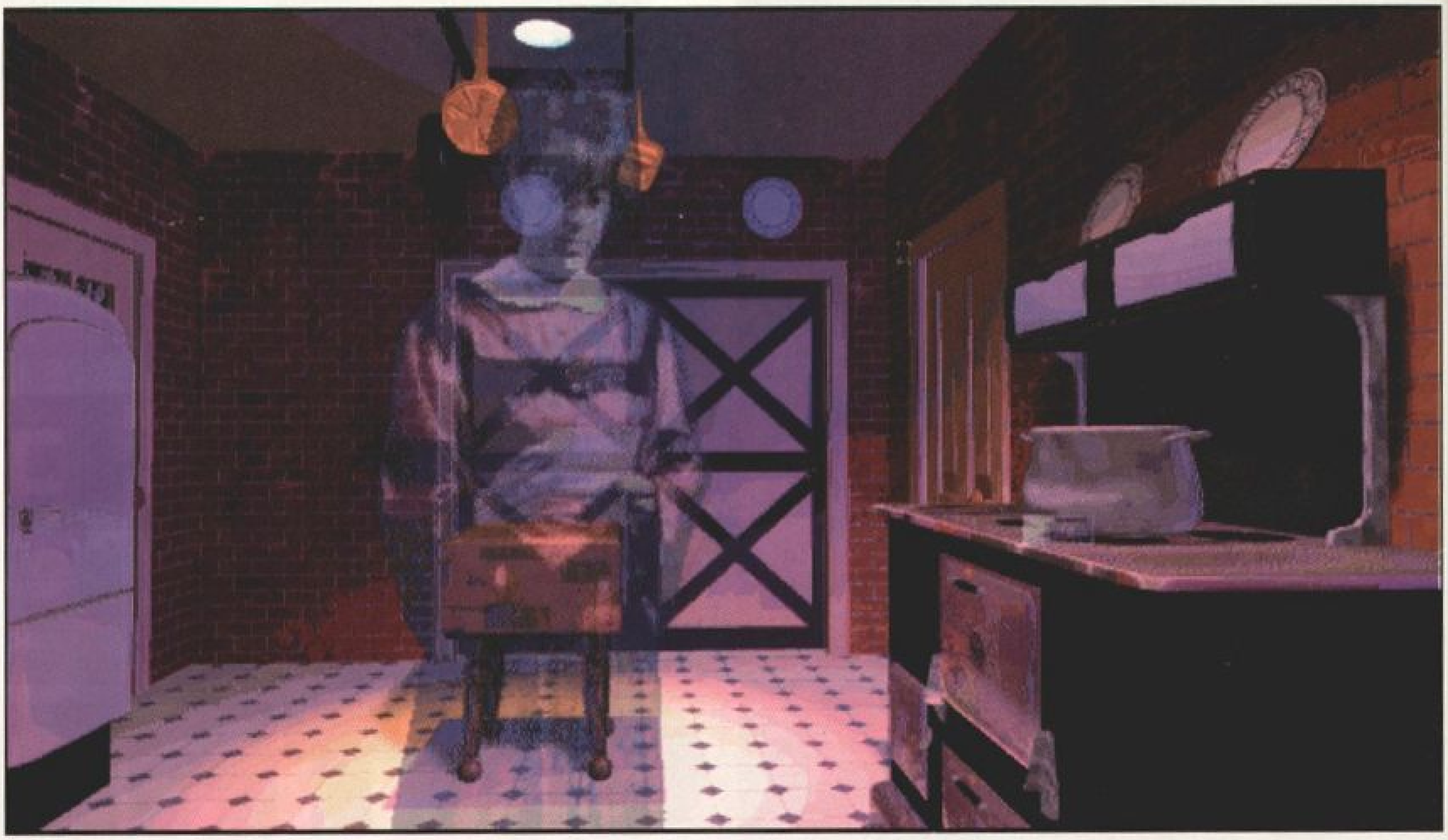
We know that horror movies are frightening. We know that Stephen King has the capacity to chill with words on a page. But computer games - scary? No way. Since the dawn of the medium, countless games have aspired to send shivers down the spines of those who play them - but more often than not the results are at best simply atmospheric, at worst little more than laughable.

But not any more - now there's a game that packs a hair-raising punch equal to anything that the likes of Wes Craven or David Cronenberg can offer. At least that's the bullish claim being made by Graeme Devine and his team at Oregon-based Trilobyte Software of their debut project, Guest. Currently being produced exclusively on CD-ROM for PC owners, it's already being hailed as the closest thing yet to a true interactive movie.

"Basically, what we wanted to do was produce a David Lynch version of Cluedo," Devine explains, going on to cite Lynch's Blue Velvet and Twin Peaks as two of the game's primary sources of inspiration. Knowing that, it doesn't take a genius to deduce that Guest is a pretty weird and spooky affair. The story tells of an evil toymaker whose work holds a sinister secret. When a series of children die in mysterious circumstances after buying his toys the local community begins to ask questions, and the plot thickens when the toymaker himself meets his demise.

The game begins when six guests are anonymously summoned to the late toymaker's remote hilltop mansion, now eerily vacant. In an attempt to give the story a bizarre, dreamlike quality, the player is cast not as a conventional character but an invisible entity, a free-roaming body that can go anywhere within the giant house, solve puzzles, work with objects - but not interact with characters. As more of a passive observer than active character, the player's task is to explore the house and follow the exploits of the six quests as they go about their business in order to solve the mystery of the toymaker.

"Guest is like a real movie - it's a rollercoaster ride," says Devine. The big difference is, he says, is that the player is given a free rein to follow the story's development any way he pleases, following characters and exploring the secrets of the house. "The mansion has 22 rooms, and each room has its own secret and a puzzle to solve." The theory is that, quite apart from the main



story, the player can become engrossed in simply discovering the nightmarish complexities of the rooms and corridors for himself. Gameplay is split into two distinct types - what Devine calls "environmental" and "mind-game" puzzles. Environmental puzzles are like those that might be found in any conventional graphic adventure, while the mind-games are little brainteasers that crop up in certain rooms and only give up a reward when completed.

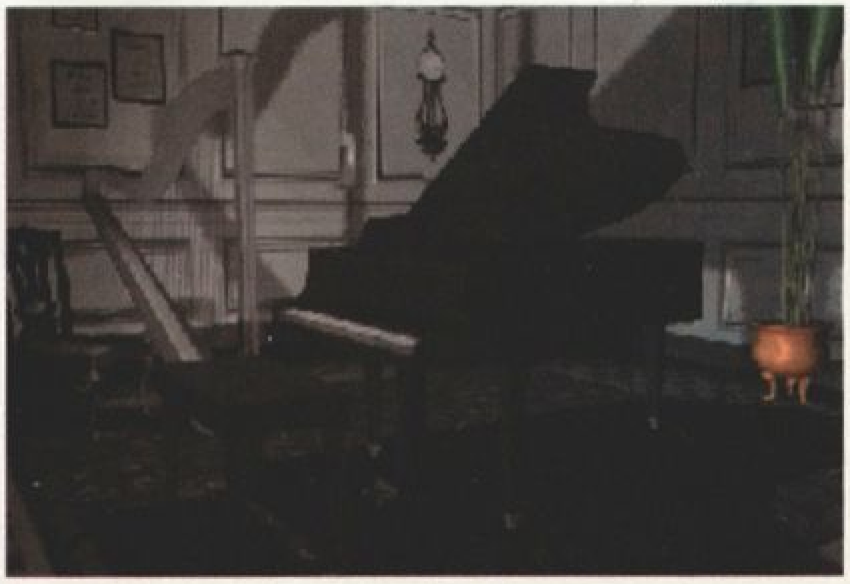
Anyone who actually experiences Guest for the first time, however, is less likely to be interested in the complexities of the game and more fascinated by what's taking place on screen. There can be little doubt that Guest is one of the most visually stunning games any home machine has ever seen. Two years of painstaking graphical 3D rendering by Trilobyte has paid off with incredible results - every surface, from the carpets to the walls to the furniture in every room is texture-mapped to look like the real thing, and because everything is rendered in "true" 3D, the player can walk around rooms with total freedom and watch the scenery scroll and rotate perfectly around his point of view. So impressive are the animation sequences recently sent to Virgin UK on video that some who have viewed it steadfastly refuse to believe that the graphics have been generated on anything less than a supercomputer - let alone a 386 PC. Stand back and squint a little and you could be watching video footage of a real house.

"Each of the rooms in the house took us at least a month to produce," reveals Devine, explaining that designing and laying out a room in 3D to such exacting specifications is an immensely time-consuming affair. "There's a large house about half a mile away from our office, sited in front of a cemetery - we've used it as the title screen in the game

trilobyte
Production

"Parts of this game are going to scare people to DEATH!"

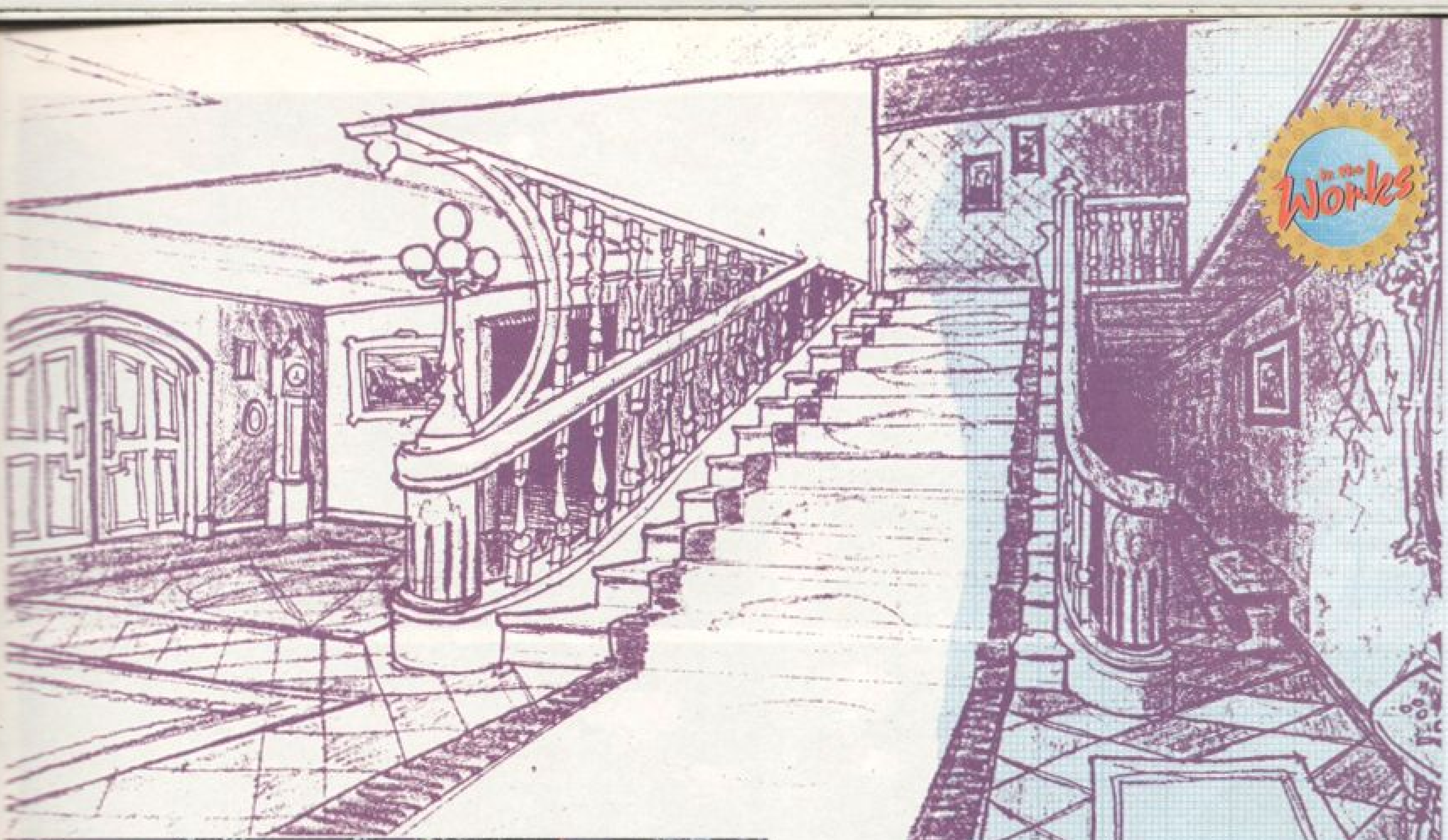
Trilobyte's Graeme Devine.

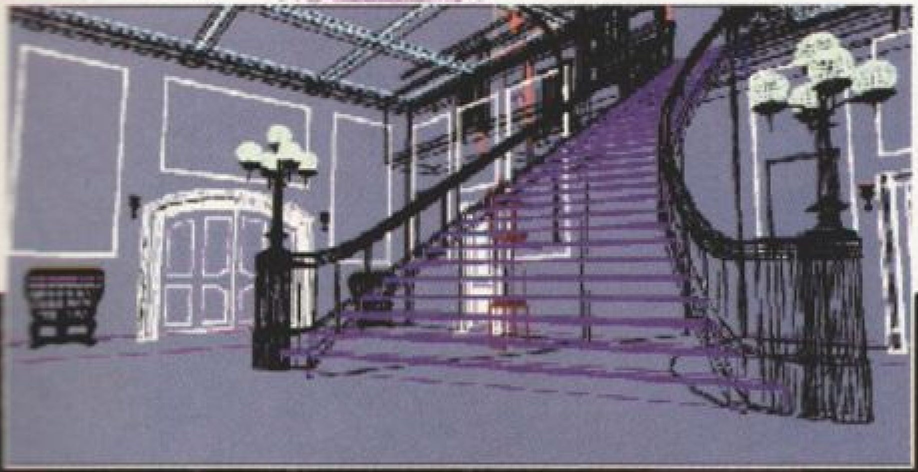


This may seem like nothing more than an everyday music room, but then appearances can be deceptive - especially in a game like Guest. Every room has its own puzzle and secret for the player to discover.

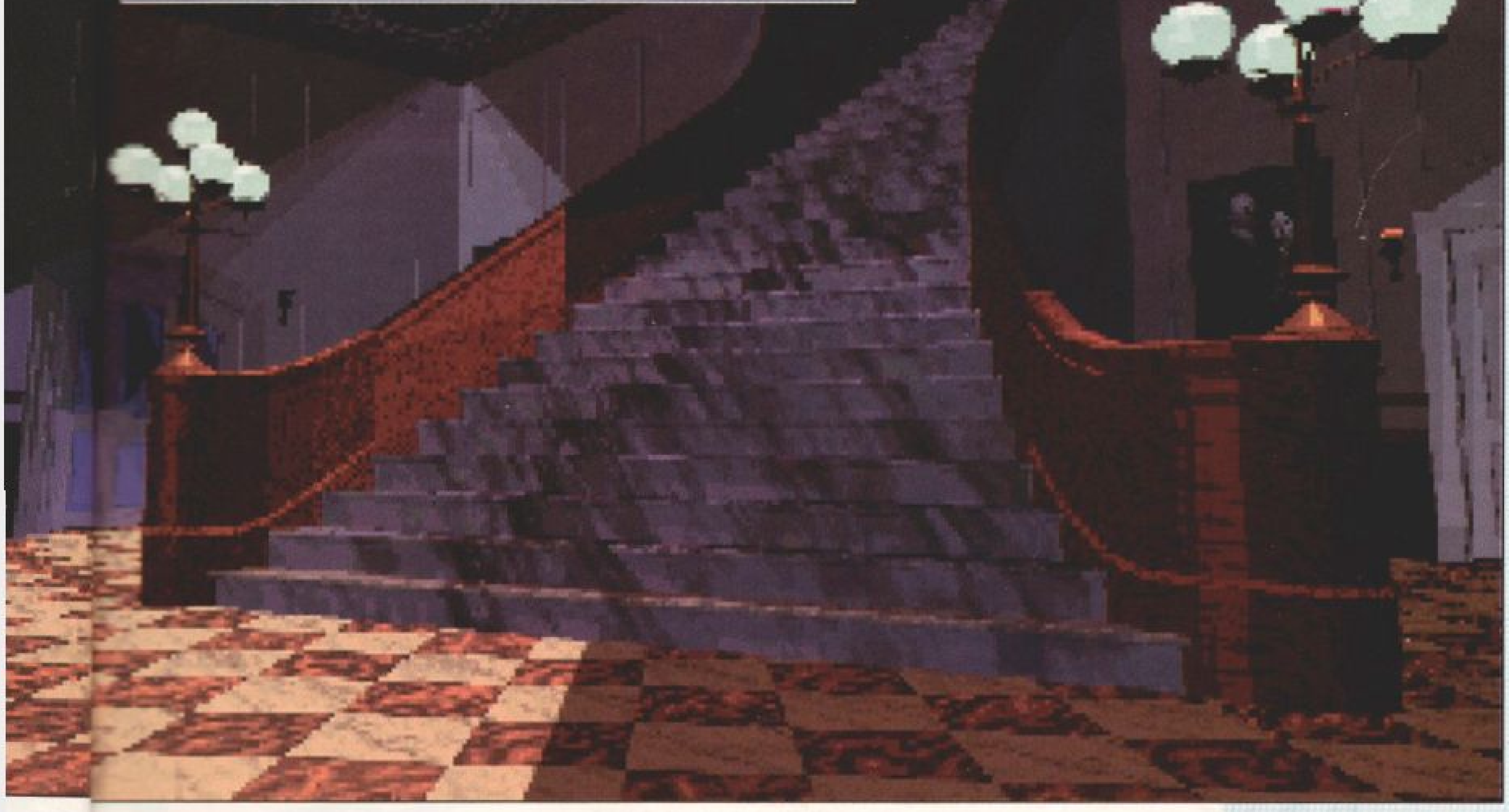
Woo-ooo-ooo! The player bumps into one of the ghostly visitors in Guest''s kitchen. Pretty spooky, eh? Don't try to make contact, though - the guests can speak to each other but pay absolutely no attention to you. Oh, and watch out for a ghostly cat that walks through walls. Weird.

ne of the
retty spooky,
- the
y absolutely
for a
Weird.

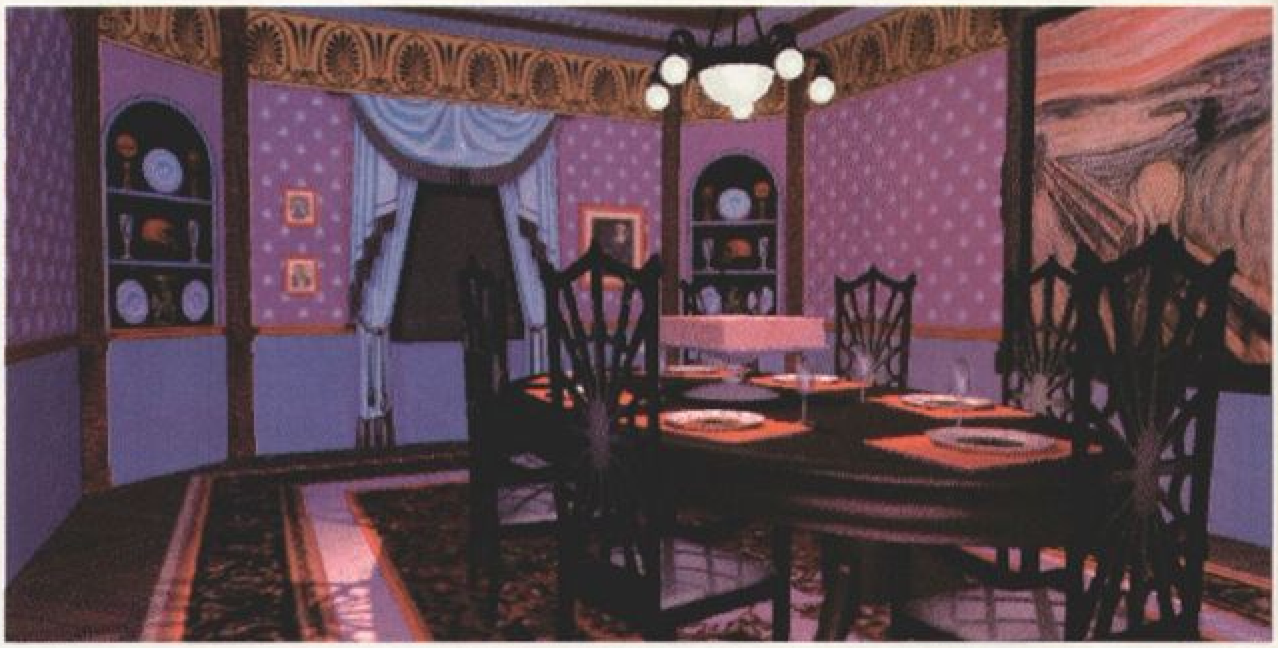


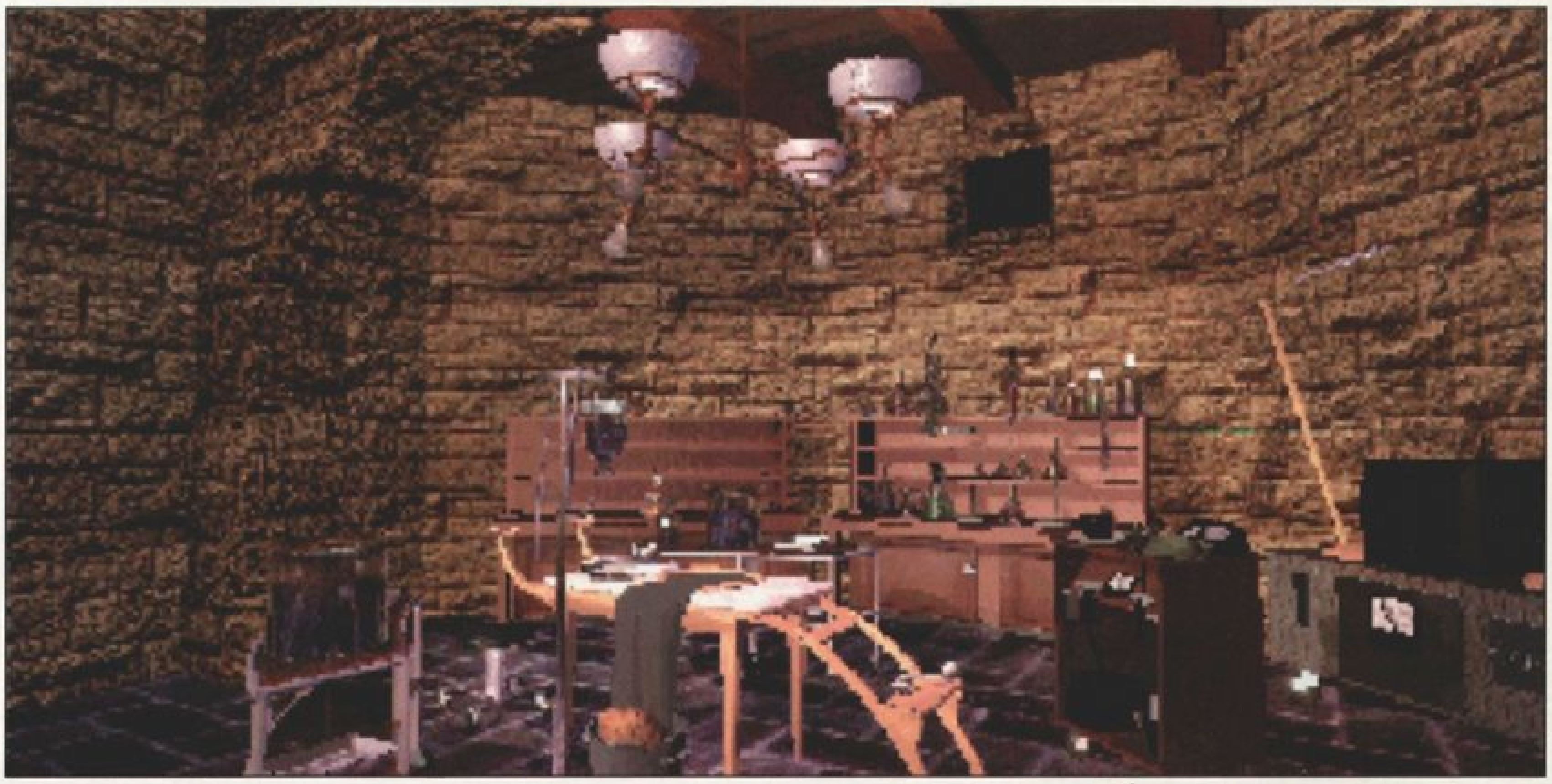


And now's the time for all you aunts and uncles to go out of the room as we show you how the Guest screens are made. Each room starts as a conceptual sketch (pictured above), and from there the graphic artists begin the painstaking task of transforming that simple line-drawing into an exacting 3D wireframe diagram (left). That task alone takes about a month to complete, and even when that's done it takes still more time for the 486 PC that does all the legwork to render all the objects and surfaces, giving them that distinctive textured and authentic look. The screen shown here is the mansion's elaborate lobby where the game begins. The animation as the player travels up the stairway is nothing shoirt of astounding.



and we were going to walk around inside with a video camera to get some ideas, but it was far too small for our purposes." The result is that every room and corridor in Guest has been produced from scratch - a process so expensive that Devine estimates that it actually would have been cheaper to build the entire house as a studio set and digitise the screens from that!





Complex storylines and technical achievement may all be very well, but is it SCARY? Well, considering the available technology and the lengths that Graeme and his team have gone to, it certainly ought to be. The game has been designed in such a way that it will constantly hit the player with a combination of straightforward movie-style shocks and more general "eerie" unsettling imagery in much the same way as horror classic The Shining. "There are parts of this game where we are going to scare the player to death!" Devine boasts. "We've gone all out to make the experience as claustrophobic as possible. Imagine playing Alien, with all the tension and fear - that's just what Guest is like."

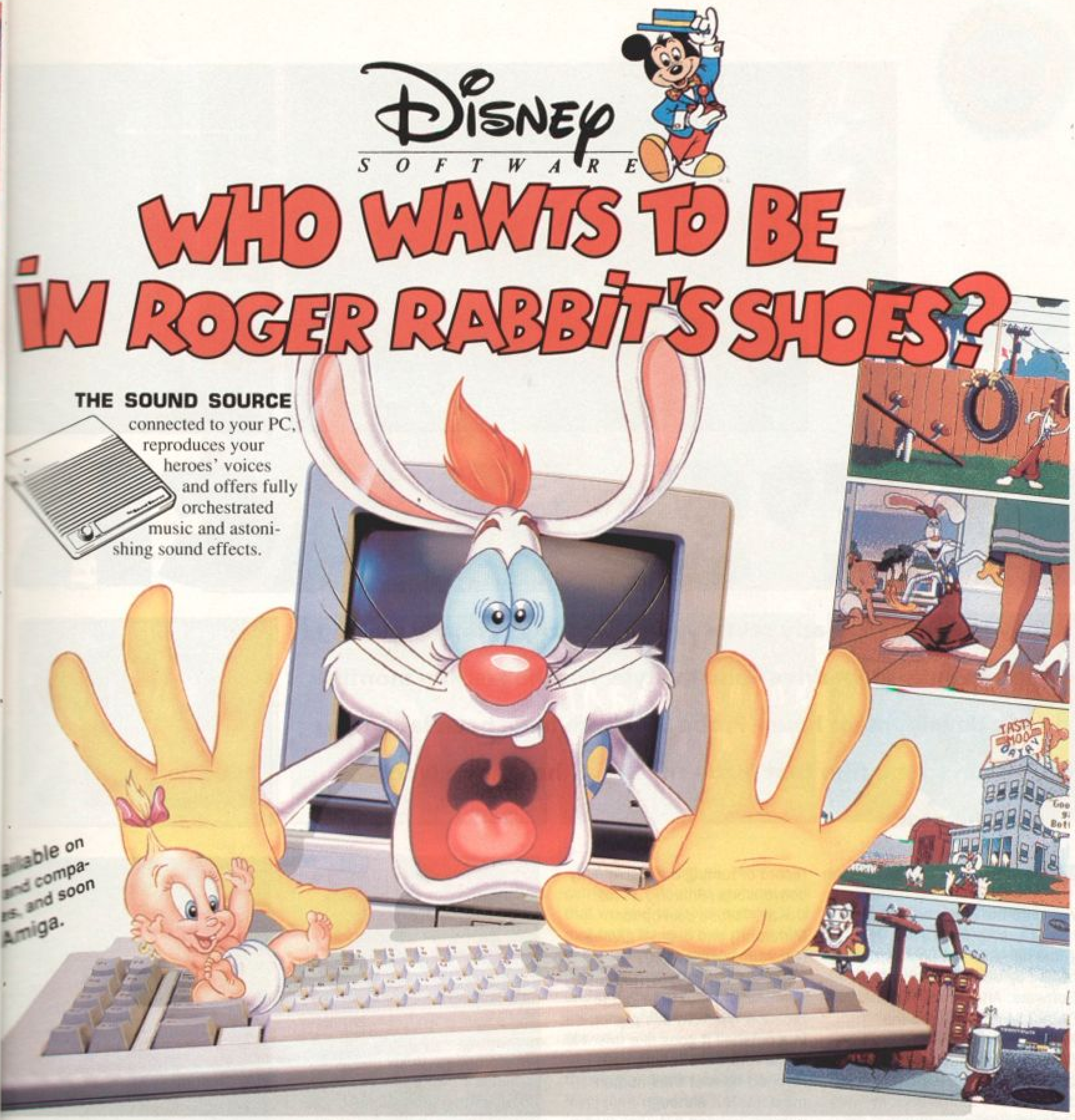
Though the CD drive's primary function is as a mass data store (Guest is so huge it would fill no less than 90 conventional floppy disks), its use as a sound tool is being used to the full to provide additional atmosphere. The ghostly guests' dialogue has been recorded by real actors - over 40 minutes' worth and music is being provided by The Fat Man, who recently scored Wing Commander II. "We wanted Danny Elfman to do the soundtrack" Devine reveals, "but we couldn't get his agent on the phone." Instead, the designers have opted for something similar in style to Elfman's gothic, almost macabre film scores, but without the fairground-ish comedic aspects - the intention is to make the sound dark and looming.

Despite criticisms levelled at so-called interactive movies and "hypergames" in the past, Devine is confident that Guest is a cut above the likes of Cosmic Osmo. "The problem with games like Osmo is that they don't present a coherent story - you just wander around and look at stuff. Guest has a real mystery to unravel, and I also think it has a high replay value - even after you've solved it you can go back and see new puzzles ."

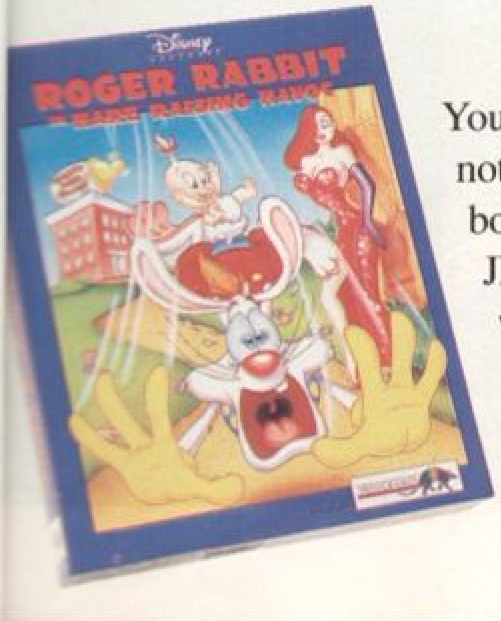
Although Guest isn't due to hit the shelves until much later in the year, Trilobyte are already drawing up plans for a second game along the same lines.

So start saving up for your CD drive now. Oh, and better get some extra pairs of underpants while you're at it.

● Gary Whitta


DISNEY SOFTWARE
WHO WANTS TO BE IN ROGER RABBIT'S SHOES?
ailable on
and compa-
es, and soon
Amiga.

THE SOUND SOURCE connected to your PC, reproduces your heroes' voices and offers fully orchestrated music and astonishing sound effects.

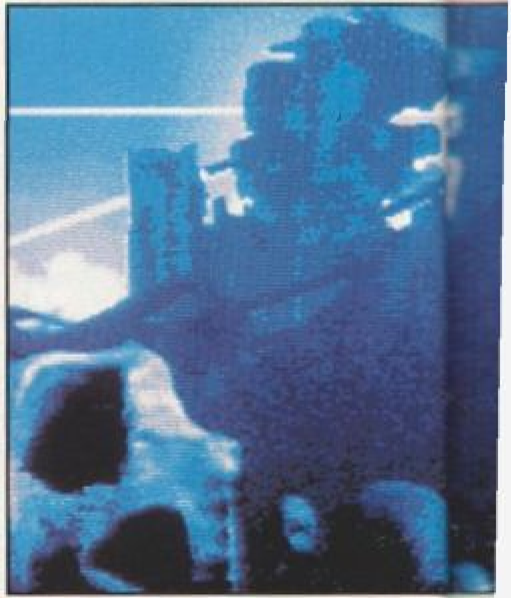

Disney
ROGER RABBIT

Who'd be mad enough to slip into ROGER RABBIT's shoes?... You!

Your mission : to collar devilish BABY HERMAN before MOMMY notices his escape... or you will be put through the mill! All kinds of booby-traps await you thanks to the sly little wretch, and the heady JESSICA will be keeping an eye on your exploits, so you have been warned!!! Disney offers you this interactive cartoon with astounding graphics, humorous animations and a marvellous soundtrack.

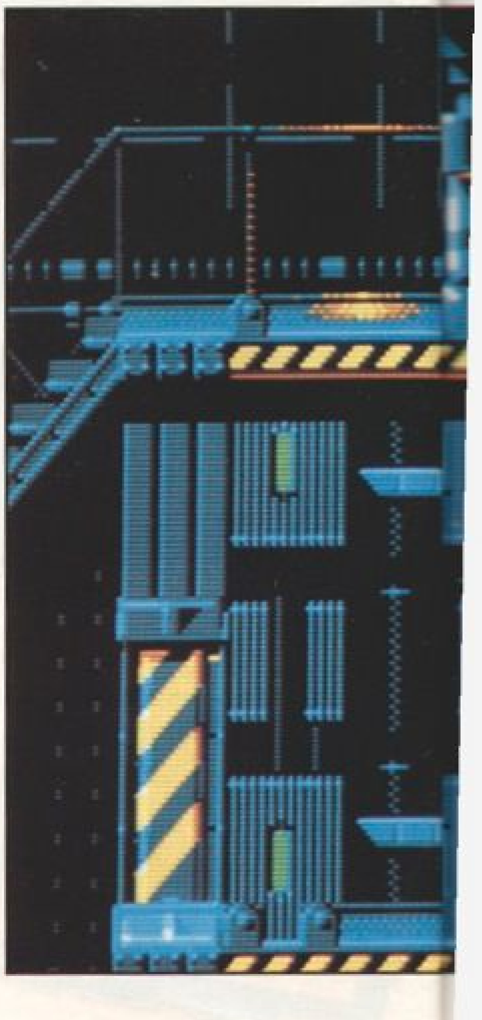
Developed by BlueSky Software
© The Walt Disney Company and Amblin Entertainment, Inc.
INFOGRAMES Ldt 18, A Old Town, Clapham,
London SW4 OLB - UK. Tel : 071/738 81 99

Distributed by INFOGRAMES

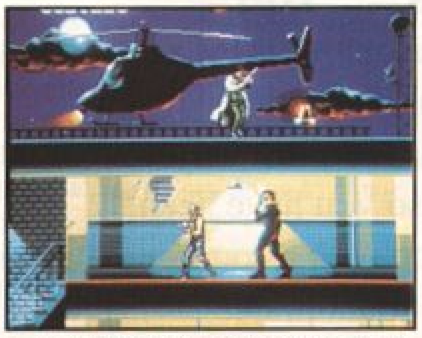


HE'S BACK

It may have taken nearly seven years, but Arny is finally making it on to the Sega Megadrive - and in style. For the last ten months tip-top development house Probe Software have been labouring on a tie-in to the film that made the Big A the star he is today... The Terminator.



The Terminator can be forgiven for taking so long to make its way onto the Megadrive. The path hasn't exactly been easy. The game rights to the film were owned by US-based Bethesda Software. After some negotiation Bethesda relinquished the Megadrive and Master System rights to Virgin Games. Then, after considering tenders from several development teams back in February, Virgin eventually awarded the contract to Probe Software, boys with a proven track record of turning out high-quality conversions (*Smash T.V.* for Ocean, *Turtles* coin-op for Mirrorsoft) and original games (*Supremacy* for Virgin).



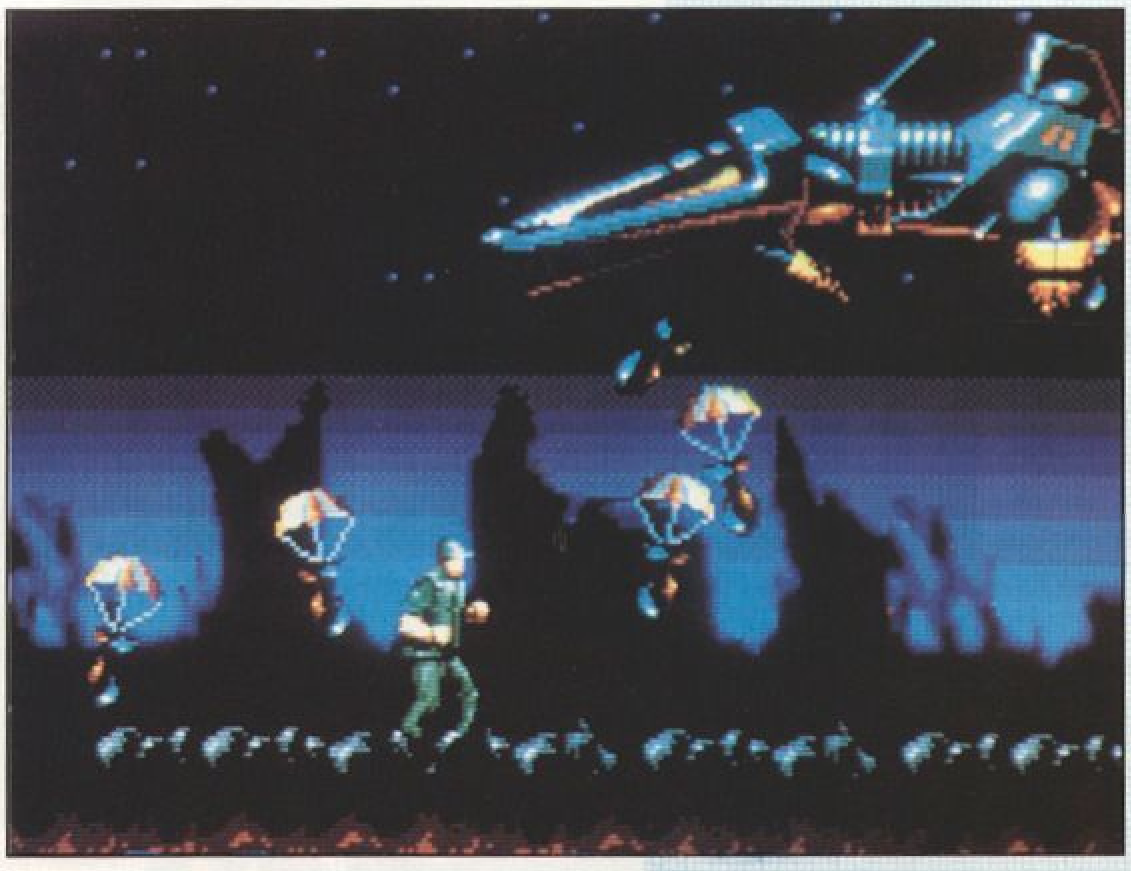
Reese wisely decides to use the roof of the Police Station to try and escape the Terminator. Much safer than facing the brute inside the building.

If you don't know The Terminator's plot then you're probably not from this planet, but in a nutshell it goes like this. Far in the future the robots have revolted against their human masters. But although outpowered and outnumbered, the humans are winning thanks to the strategic brilliance of their leader John Connor.

The robots send a cyborg, the Terminator of the title, back to 1984 to kill Connor's mother, Sarah, and thus render the humans leader-less. The humans learn of the plan and also manage to send a lone trooper back to protect Sarah, herself ignorant of the pivotal role she plays in mankind's history. The battle lines are drawn and the stage is set for one of the best action movies ever made.

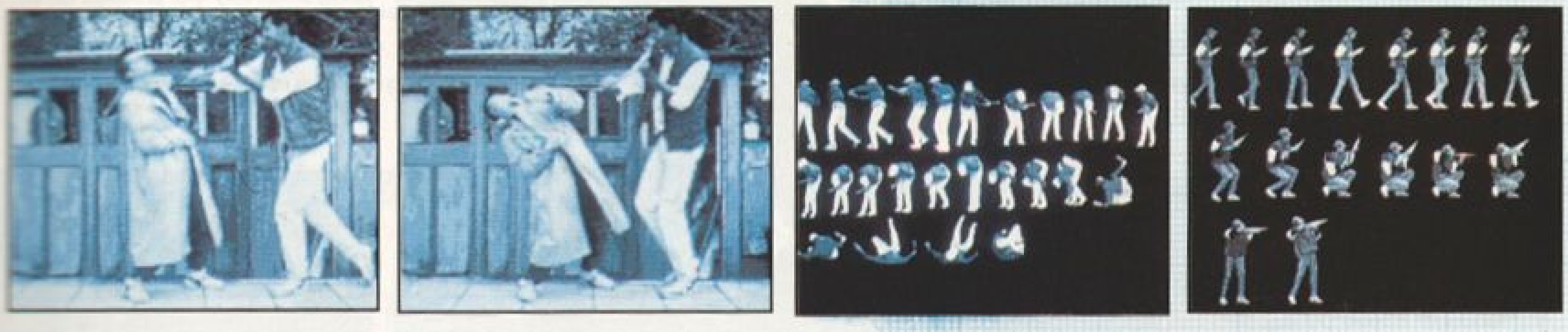
Gripping stuff with excellent tie-in potential. But as Probe boss Fergus McGovern points out, there were a few strings attached, "Our contract said the player had to be Reese, he couldn't be the Terminator, and the player wasn't able to kill the policemen. Apparently it's 'inappropriate to kill policemen in America'. That's why you see them getting up again after they've been shot in the game."

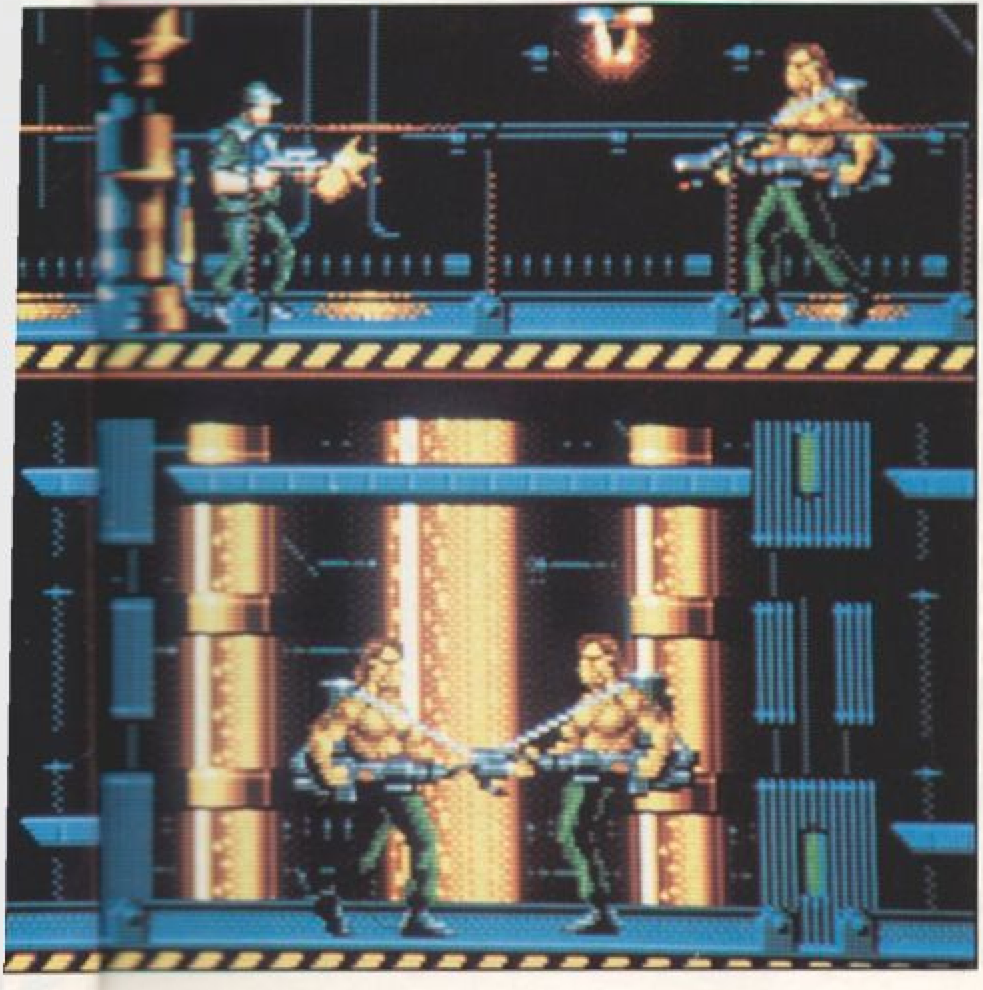
Work started in March, with the team lead by project manager Neil Young who was partly responsible for the game's design. He continues the story, "The trouble with The Terminator is that on the face of it it sounds like a strong licence. But if you can't play the Terminator itself then you're limited as to how the game's going to play. All Reese does in the film is protect Sarah while being chased by the Terminator. And you can't build a good game around someone who's always running away."



(Above) Before the beginning of each level there's a graphic and text direct from the film explaining the progress of the game's plot.
(Right) Reese under attack again - this time from Hunter-Killers.

(Below, left to right) Three frames from the digitised video footage of Neil and the boys slugging it out, with the cut-out sprite templates at the far right.





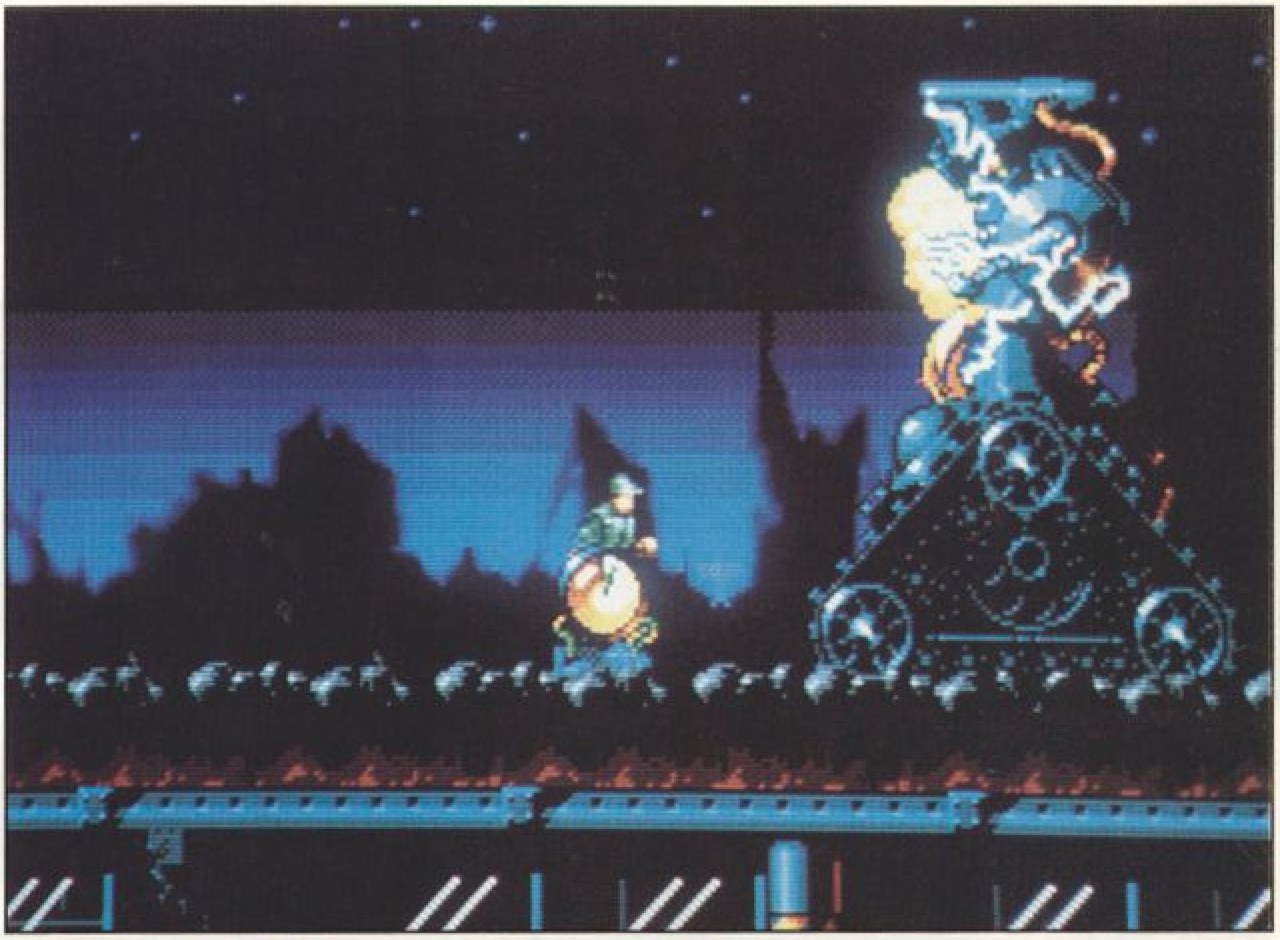
And that's not all. Neil carries on, "Another problem was that we had to make a game that met both the approval of the film companies involved in terms of how the characters were used and the approval of Virgin Games in terms of how the game played."

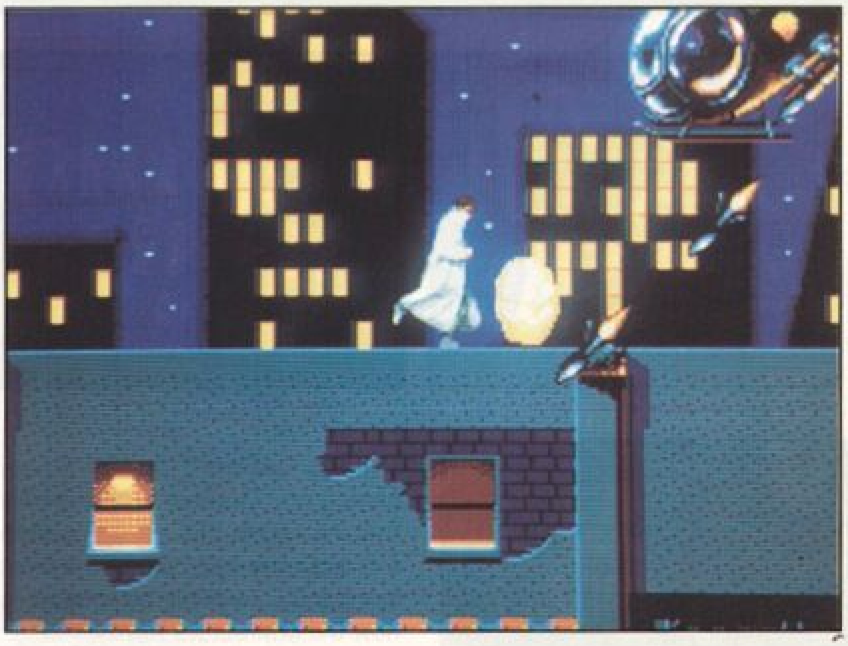
The result of all this double-thinking and compromise is a six-level multiway scrolling shoot-'em-up, with the player guiding Reese through a variety of battle zones, fighting robots, LA cops and street punks, culminating in an all-out confrontation with the Terminator. (For a detailed breakdown of the game see the 'On the level' box).

The game's look underwent several revisions before the one seen here. According to Fergus, in the early days the game's sprites were twice as big, with correspondingly large backgrounds. The parallax scrolling was omitted because the second display screen was used to animate a giant Hunter-Killer that used to swoop in on the Reese figure. However, Virgin insisted that parallax be implemented (meaning the ship had to be lost) and the sprites made smaller.

Then the team toyed with depicting the backgrounds in inclined 3D, akin to that used in the *Turtles* coin-op. However, because the sprites had already been drawn in 2D, the two just didn't gel together, and a traditional 2D background was settled upon.

There have been other problems beside contractual ones to contend with. As Neil points out, "This was the programming team's - and Probe's - first Megadrive game. So, the first thing I gave the team to work on was the intro sequence. It's a good training ground because it uses all of the game writing basics in one; music, parallax scrolling with sprites overlaid on top. Then





(Above) Look at the size of those things! Reese, armed only with grenades, has to blow this critter to robot Hell if he's to find the lab entrance.

(Left) On the roof Reese is attacked by SWAT helicopters - will he ever find peace?

when they'd got this right I moved them on to writing the game itself."

The fruits of the team's first struggles with the mighty Megadrive are impressive. The intro is a spot-on copy of the film's mood-laden titles sequence, with the giant letters spelling 'The Terminator' slowly scrolling across each other, the game credits spitting out teletype-fashion and a close facsimile of the sombre pounding Terminator theme pulsing away in the background.

Due to contractual binds the music isn't identical, but it's damn close. According to Neil, "I just went to the musician and said 'Give me The Terminator' and this is what he came back with." During the game there's a variety of tunes for each level, and while none are taken from the film the mood of them suits the game perfectly.

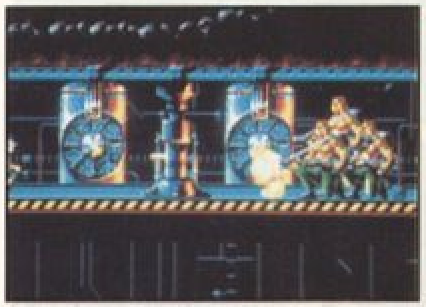
But it's the sprite animation in The Terminator that grabs most people's attention. Not only does it look great, there's lots of it, with Reese performing all sorts of feats; running, jumping, firing (the animation of Reese pulling the shotgun out from under his longcoat is superb), swinging from beams, lobbing grenades - you name it, this guy does it.

When praised on this aspect of the game, Neil states, "Right from the start we wanted to do something that was a little bit different, something that would give the game a different look."

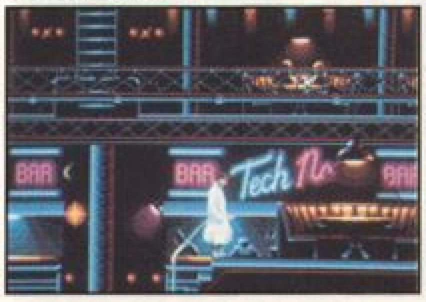
The reason for the realistic, fluid nature of the animation in The Terminator, Neil reveals, is that the sprites were based on video footage of him and the programmers pretending to beat each other up. "It was partly a matter of time," he explains (the game is due for release in March 1992). "To get a graphic artist to hand draw all the animations from scratch would have taken too long." As it stands, The Terminator boasts over 480 individual frames of animation for the sprites of Reese, the Terminator, the cops and the punks.

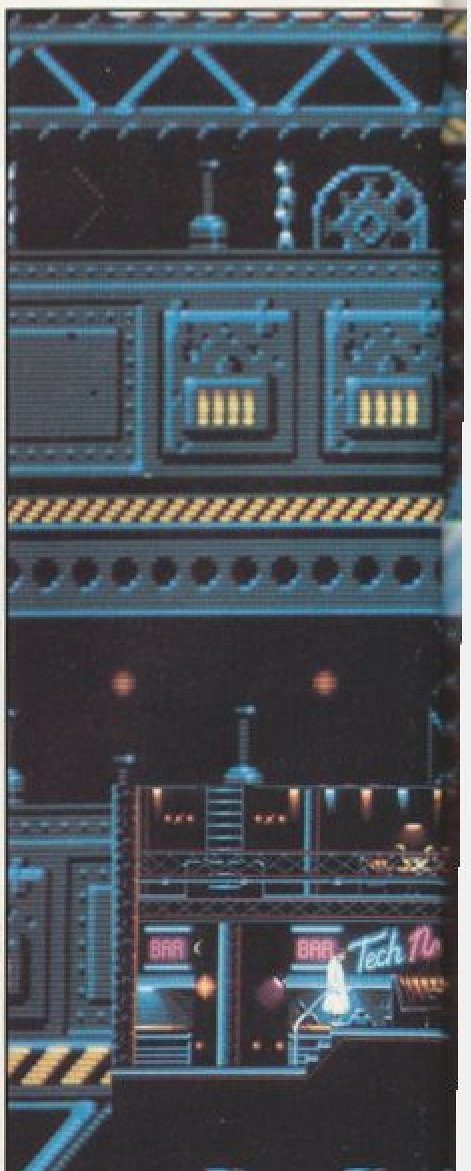
Basically the process worked like this. Home videos were made of the team smacking each other about in costumes approximating to those of the game characters. Frames from the film were then 'grabbed' and stored on computer. The graphic artist then cut out the animation frames for each character and used them as reference for the final game sprites. Initially the digitised figures were ported directly in the game as sprites but they just didn't look right, according to Probe boss Fergus McGovern.

Although aware that many people have already raved about the game's animation, Neil is a little more subdued. "Personally I don't think the results are any better than you could get from someone drawing straight onto computer given enough time,



(Above) Reese battles a never-ending stream of Terminators in the lab complex. (Below) Reese enters the nightclub in search of Sarah. Lucky they don't frisk for weapons on the door - Reese has a shotgun under his longcoat!





ON THE LEVEL

The Terminator is split into six levels spread over four main areas. Snap to it, soldier, and get the low-down on each battle zone.

LEVEL 1 - The year is 2029. Reese, armed only with a hand grenade, has to make his way across a skull-strewn wasteland, battling giant robot tanks and Hunter-Killer drones, in the search of the hidden entrance to Skynet's underground research lab.

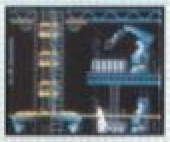
Once inside, Reese must locate the time-displacement equipment and blow it up with his explosives (these also act as smart bombs but numbers are limited so make sure you don't waste them). Although teeming with Terminators, there's an Uzi 9mm to be found that makes life a lot easier.

Bombs in place, Reese has a short time to escape the complex before it's destroyed by the explosion. Having made it to safety the human resistance decide to transport Reese through time to...

LEVELS 2-4 - The year is 1984. Reese has located Sarah Connor, the object of the Terminator's assassination mission, in the Tech Noir night club. A desperate race through the city makes up the majority of these levels, with Reese blasting both police and punks with a pump-action shotgun. Reese's epic journey takes him over the city's roof tops (where he's attacked by SWAT helicopters), through a building sight and down into the sewers.

On finally reaching the nightclub, Reese discovers the Terminator has made it to Sarah before him. A vicious firefight ensues, with the Terminator able to withstand a belly full of lead before it is forced to retreat.

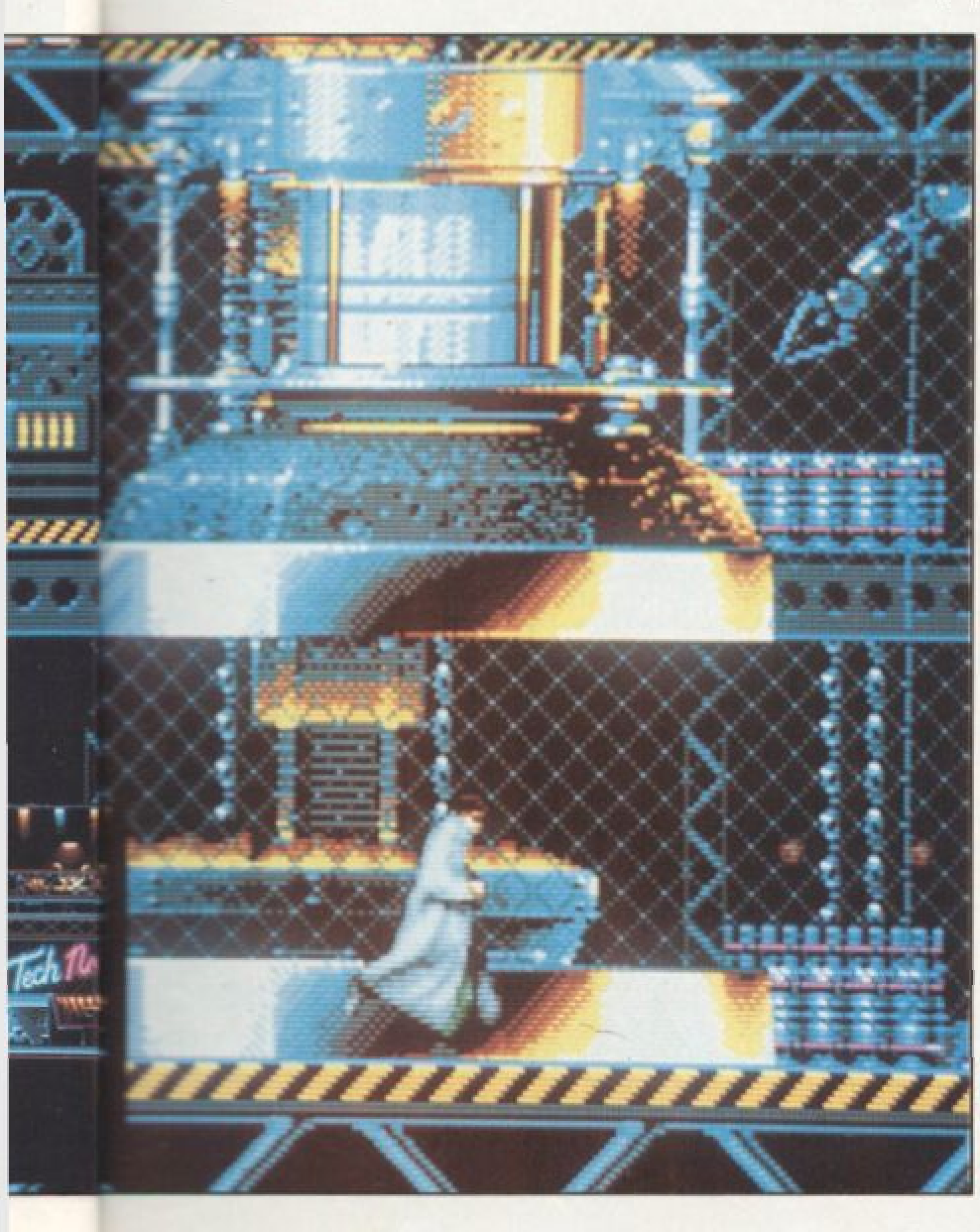
LEVEL 5 - The infamous police station scene. Reese and Sarah have been arrested by the LAPD, but the ever-relentless Terminator blasts its way into the building in pursuit. Reese, managing to pick the lock on his cell, must try to escape while avoiding the police, freed criminals and, of course, the Big T.



LEVEL 6 - The final showdown takes place in a giant engineering works. The Terminator flesh covering has been stripped away, leaving behind the terrifying steel endoskeleton. As Reese searches the huge complex in search of Sarah, the Terminator tries all means at its disposal to kill Reese.

Eventually, after a lengthy shoot-out, the Terminator explodes. But it's not dead yet. Its upper half - the arms and head - still functions. To finally dispatch the Terminator Reese must lure it under a steel press where it's finally crushed into oblivion.

Or is it? As the 'Congratulation' screen fades away, the voice of the Terminator is heard... "I'll be back."



(Far left) Level 6, and Reese's frantic search through the steel mill proves fruitful when he discovers Sarah unconscious and slumped against a wall. But the game's not over yet. He still has to destroy the stripped-down Terminator (left) by luring it under the towering pneumatic steel press.

although I admit that there is a more natural look to the sprite movement. But then you're always hyper-critical about your own stuff. I would definitely use the technique again. But really you need more time and resources, professional actors and that sort of thing, for it to work properly."

Due to the contract, there's little chance of the game being ported onto any of the home computers. Actually, to be honest, there's no chance at all. When it's suggested that it'd be fairly easy to convert onto the Amiga, Neil begs to differ, "The Amiga and the Megadrive aren't similar at all, except that they both use 68000 CPUs. The problem with the Megadrive is that everything to do with the graphics is different. The ST, Amiga, PC, Spectrum and Amstrad are all similar in that they use bitmapped screens to display their graphics. All the consoles, the NES, Master System, Super NES and Megadrive, store their screens as a series of blocks, like the Commodore 64."

The Terminator on the Megadrive is shaping up to be a superior blast. However, I can't help feeling that it's a shame that the big Hunter-Killer from the early version had to go. Fergus has no regrets though, "I think it's a better game now for the changes. Big isn't always better." Try telling that to Schwarzenegger.

● **David Upchurch**

AT LAST

The first comprehensive guide to PC Entertainment and more!

PC review

- Offering more than entertainment, **PC Review** tackles graphics, sound, hardware and productivity based software like *no* other magazine can.
- FREE discs for you to sample the best in entertainment software.
- FREE supplements covering the best games by genre.
- Comprehensive reviews and qualified information about past, present and future software.
- Huge Shareware section
- News section
- Buyers guide
- Packed with editorial about the ultimate in entertainment software.

PC Review - available from all good newsagents *NOW!*

emap. images

A New Age In Home Entertainment And Education

CDTV finds its place alongside the TV and Hi-Fi system in the home. It is similar in appearance to existing video and CD players and, with its infra red remote control, is just as simple to operate. But that's just the beginning. CDTV transforms television from a passive to an active medium. The vast storage capabilities of the CD make it an ideal mass information provider, capable of storing and displaying a combination of colour pictures, text, graphics, voice and stereo music of the highest quality. CDTV offers a new realm of audio and visual experience for everyone.

ENTERTAINMENT

FOR REFERENCE

MUSIC

For the classical music buff it is possible not only to hear Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, but to see the orchestra perform, follow the score and read about the composer's life and times. The Timetable of Science and Innovation walks you through 6,250 key events in scientific history. It employs animated maps to show where every event occurred and a visual lift-off from the earth's surface. Key events are accompanied by audio presentations with graphics and sound recordings from the archives of the world's great museums. Browse quickly or examine an exhibit in detail.

FOR COLLEGES & BUSINESS

When Toyota, decided to open a car assembly plant in Derby, Derbyshire County Council commissioned the production of 'Japan World', a CDTV title which allows students to explore and experience the Japanese language, lifestyle and culture. It also provides a valuable insight to businessmen with information on Japanese business philosophy and negotiation protocol.

PRODUCTIVITY

FOR EDUCATION

EDUCATION

For young children learning to read can be an adventure! In the title Cinderella, for example, they can use the remote control unit to click on words and pictures to hear pronunciations, syllables, definitions and second language translations. And learning about the world can be fun too. The World Vista Atlas provides detailed information in words and pictures on the history, architecture, language and geography of each country. This can be cross referenced to compare with details of other countries.

REFERENCE

FOR FUN

There is a wide range of entertainment titles available for every age-group. Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective, includes a video and audio tour of Victorian London. Players can choose suspects for Holmes and Watson to interrogate and can search issues of the London Times for clues. A CDTV disc's graphics capabilities take action and simulation games to a new level. Falcon makes you a pilot of an F-16 fighter and has accurate simulations of weapons systems, cockpit controls and flight characteristics allowing you to zoom like the ultimate stunt pilot with extraordinary realism.

FOR HOBBIES

PERIODICALS

CDTV can also enhance your personal interests. *The Gardenfax Series* is designed for use by novice or expert and provides hundreds of full colour illustrations, as well as information on planting and requirements for care. New Basics Cookbook provides full colour illustrations of recipes, 'talks' to you to offer tips as you cook and automatically substitutes recipes with a click of the remote control.

ARTS & LEISURE

CDTV offers a seemingly endless range of possibilities for learning, entertainment and enrichment for everyone whether in the home, the classroom or in business.

Commodore

CDTV™

INTERACTIVE MULTIMEDIA

THE WORLD's FIRST MULTIMEDIA SYSTEM FOR THE HOME

Are you bored with the TV? Do you yearn for something a little more interesting, something which stimulates the old grey matter and indulges your desire to be entertained? *Enter the Commodore CDTV, the world's* first advanced learning and entertainment system which plugs straight into your television. Based upon the familiar compact disc player, the CDTV offers a rich set of information and communication capabilities. It brings together pictures, words and sounds in a new format, joining them together in a fascinating world of audio visual challenge and experience.

The multimedia CDTV player combines a professional CD audio system, advanced computer technology and infra red remote control, to offer a wide variety of interactive applications. These range from games, music, gardening and personal health, to educational discs for any level. In addition, CDTV provides high quality audio reproduction for existing music CDs. CDTV is very easy to use and gives you total control over what you see and hear, offering you the chance to learn new skills and discover hidden talents

£499

INCLUDING VAT & DELIVERY - Order ref: CCD 1000

FREE TITLES!

With every CDTV from Silica, you will receive:

WELCOME - A GUIDE TO CDTV

The 'Welcome' disc replaces a weighty printed manual with colourful and exciting animation, sound, voices and text.

LEMMINGS — WORTH: £34.99

Up to 100 loveable Lemmings drop in to over 100 screens full of danger in this best selling arcade classic.

HUTCHINSON'S ENCYCLOPEDIA — WORTH: £49.99

The first British multi-media encyclopedia. It features over 1.8 million words, 700 biographies, 2000 pictures, 150 maps from ITN and 200 audio samples from the BBC sound archives.

PLUS! FREE HOLIDAY HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Every CDTV from Silica comes with a FREE 72 page colour brochure with accommodation vouchers. These vouchers entitle 2 people to up to 16 nights FREE hotel accommodation (other options allow 4 people to stay up to 6 nights). There are also accommodation offers on hotels in London and France.

SILICA SYSTEMS OFFER YOU

- ***FREE OVERNIGHT DELIVERY:*** On all CDTV players shipped in the UK mainland.
- ***TECHNICAL SUPPORT HELPLINE:*** Team of technical experts at your service.
- ***PRICE MATCH:*** We normally match competitors on a "Same product - Same price" basis.
- ***ESTABLISHED 12 YEARS:*** Proven track record in sales and service.
- ***BUSINESS + EDUCATION + GOVERNMENT:*** Volume discounts available for large orders.
- ***SHOWROOMS:*** Demonstration and training facilities at our London & Sidcup branches.
- ***THE FULL STOCK RANGE:*** All of your requirements from one supplier.
- ***FREE CATALOGUES:*** Will be mailed to you with offers and product details.
- ***PAYMENT:*** By cash, cheque, all major credit cards, or extended payment plan.

RETURN THE COUPON FOR A FULL COLOUR CDTV CATALOGUE

MAIL ORDER HOTLINE ☎ 081-309 1111

SILICA SYSTEMS

MAIL ORDER:	1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX		**Tel: 081-309 1111**
Order Lines Open:	Mon-Sat 9.00am-6.00pm	No Late Night Opening	Fax No: 081-308 0608
LONDON SHOP:	52 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1P 0BA		**Tel: 071-580 4000**
Opening Hours:	Mon-Sat 9.30am-6.00pm	No Late Night Opening	Fax No: 071-323 4737
LONDON SHOP:	Selfridges (1st Floor), Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB		**Tel: 071-629 1234**
Opening Hours:	Mon-Sat 9.30am-6.00pm	Late Night: Thursday until 8pm	Extension: 3914
SIDCUP SHOP:	1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX		**Tel: 081-302 8811**
Opening Hours:	Mon-Sat 9.00am-5.30pm	Late Night: Friday until 7pm	Fax No: 081-309 0017

To: Silica Systems, Dept ACE-1291-71, 1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX

PLEASE SEND ME A CDTV CATALOGUE

Mr/Mrs/Ms: .... Initials: .... Surname: ....

Address: ....

....

.... Postcode: ....

Tel (Home): .... Tel (Work): ....

Company Name (if applicable): ....

Which computer(s), if any, do you own? 71

E&OE - Advertised prices and specifications may change - Please return the coupon for the latest information.

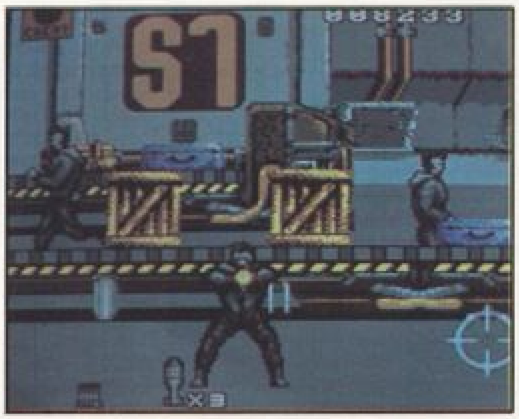
Gary Whitta's previews

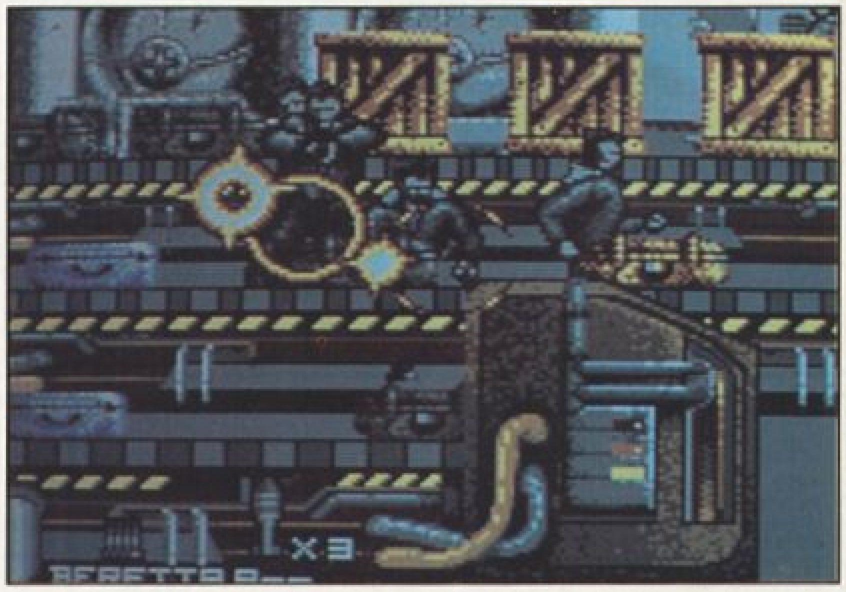
Bonjour! Auf Weidersehen! Bienvenut! Ciao! Ola! Achtung Minen! Yes, watch out A.C.E. here come the E.E.C.! It's 1992 and here come the men from the ministere to make sure that ACE Previews tows the line! From now on we'll be conforming to the tough new Euro-standards that the Brussels Euro-parliament have set for computer game previews. Though other magazines may fall well behind, offering so-called "Sneaky Peeks" at games that are already in the shops, you know you can rely on ME to provide you with only the choicest morsels of up-and-coming software. Aaah, you can already smell it in the air that it's going to be a great year for games. Your mouth starts watering, like when that delicious cooking aroma wafts into the front room from the kitchen in the evening. Mmm-mmm. Now stop drooling all over the page and get stuck in. There's plenty for everyone, so help yourself!

DIE HARD 2 *Grandslam*

Everyone knows that the sequel to the classic Bruce Willis action flick wasn't a patch on the original - but if it's any consolation, it at least looks like it'll spawn a more playable game. Currently being converted by Software Developer of the Year nominees Tiertex, it's a five-level concoction of action sequences based on key scenes from the film. Yes, yes, it's hardly an original format but it still looks like it'll be a bit of alright.

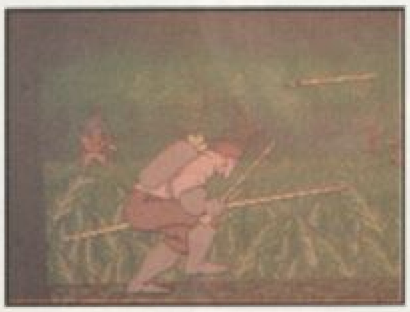
Not surprisingly, you take on the wry smile and receeding hairline of unlikely hero John McClane as he battles to save Washington's Dulles airport from an elite terrorist group. All of the movie's more memorable scenes are in there, featuring the baggage hall shootout (pictured here), the high-speed race on those snow-buggy things and, of course, that apocalyptic kicking-in session on the wing of a speeding 747. In between the action there are more cerebral sub-game interludes where the player must crack a radio code to listen in on the terrorist's chatter and man an air traffic control console to save the crippled airplanes. It certainly sounds quite tasty, but we'll have to wait a while to see how well it's been executed. Amiga and ST owners will get their chance to Die Harder within a few months, and there should be a full review in the next issue.

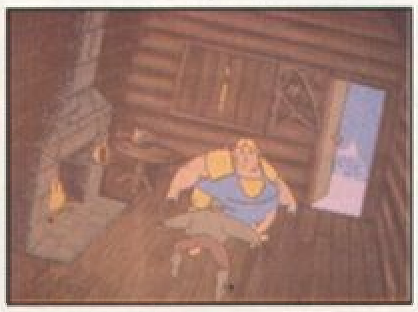




GUY SPY *Empire*

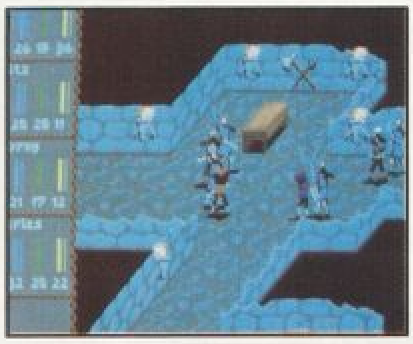
What's this? A game from Sullivan Bluth in the Dragon's Lair/Space Ace mould that you can actually PLAY! Well, yes, so it would seem. Those Bluth boys from sunny Canada are blowing the biggest trumpets they've got over this one - a lot of bad things have been said about their barely-playable laserdisk conversions in the past, and this time they're out to prove a point - that you CAN have your cake and eat it, mixing cartoon-quality animation with a properly playable game. Guy Spy is a semi-parody of the James Bond adventures, with fearless and dashing secret agent Guy travelling across the world to take out the crazed Germanic tycoon Von Max before he can destroy the world with his doomsday weapon. As Guy hops from one foreign land to another, he takes on all manner of bad boys in a variety of combat situations - there's a spear-chucking fight in the Amazon jungle, a perilous quarterstaff battle played out over a ravine, a punch-up in a bar, an Egyptian swordfight and - no spy game would be without one - a ski chase and cable-car shoot-out over the swiss alps. Of course it looks delicious, but whether the claims of genuine playability are true or not remains to be seen. Keep 'em peeled for a review next month...





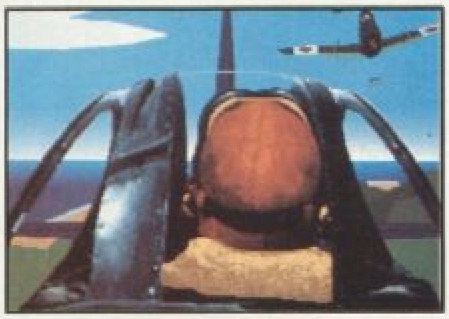
DARKLANDS *MicroProse*

What with the likes of Heimdall, Eye of the Beholder 2 and this month's Elvira 2, RPGs are certainly back in fashion this year - and they're better and more user-friendly than ever. MicroProse obviously thinks it's a bandwagon worth jumping onto as Darklands hails the company's first ever foray into the fast-growing genre. Designed by Arnold Hendrick (the man behind Gunship, F-19 and Silent Service II), it's an FRP in the traditional Dungeons'n'Dragons vein, but with a number of neat twists - not least of which being the innovative scenario. Rather than some far-off mystic world, Darklands is set in 15th Century Germany, when corruption, violence and religious genocide ruled the land, and people believed in alchemy, wizardry and big ugly dragons. Darklands draws its gameplay elements from these myths and legends, with the player's party of four adventurers travelling across the whole of Germany and taking on all the usual magicians, warriors and creatures along the way. A particularly neat innovation is that quests are created by a random generator, allowing for theoretically infinite gameplay. Darklands is due out sometime in the spring for PC owners only - hopefully 16-bit versions will follow in the Summer. But will it stand up against the awesome Ultima VII, due out at around the same time? We shall see...



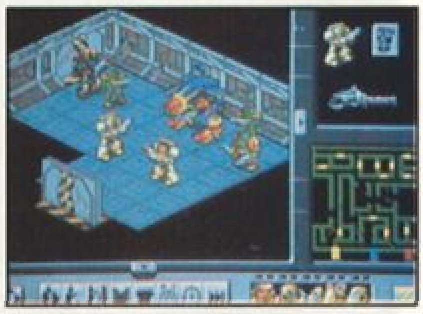
ACES OF THE PACIFIC *Dynamix*

Fancy rewriting the pages of World War II history and giving uncle Adolf another kick in the goolie? Well, now's your chance, courtesy of the creators of the original WW2 classic, Red Baron. This time it's a subject a little closer to home for the game's American designers, simulating the epic Pacific air-sea battles between the Yanks and the Japanese. Players get to fly increasingly complex missions against the kamikaze devils as part of an ongoing campaign. It's all terribly accurate historically, featuring authentic recreations of all the major fighters, bombers and ships - including the giant aircraft carriers. So far it's looking dreamy, very much in the vein of Lucasfilm's SWOTL, with some very tasty VGA graphics and super high-speed 3D. Lovely. Keep an eye out for Aces of the Pacific arriving on the PC sometime this Spring.

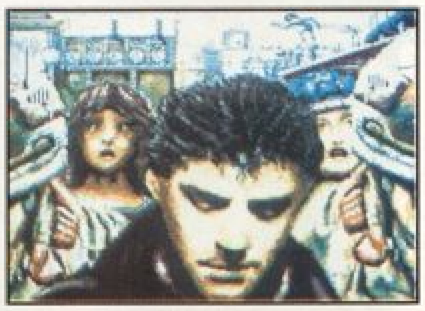


SPACE CRUSADE *Gremlin*

After the runaway success of Gremlin's adaptation of Games Workshop's best-selling board game Hero Quest, the Sheffield software impresarios are already putting the finishing touches to what looks like will be an even more successful venture. This time another Games Workshop hit gets the Gremlin treatment, as their ultra-successful RPG Space Crusade is brought kicking and screaming onto the 16-bit machines. It's pretty much the same deal all round - once again the game is viewed using either a 2D top-down or isometric Knight Lore-style viewpoint as the player shunts his team of rock-hard space marines around a series of spaceships that have been overrun by foul alien hordes. You'll get the chance to do battle with slavering green-skinned monstrosities and clanking ED-209 lookalikes, solve all the usual RPG-style puzzles and generally have a right rollicking time. Can't wait? Well that's tough, because it's not out until the Spring. At least it gives you plenty of time to brush up on the board game.



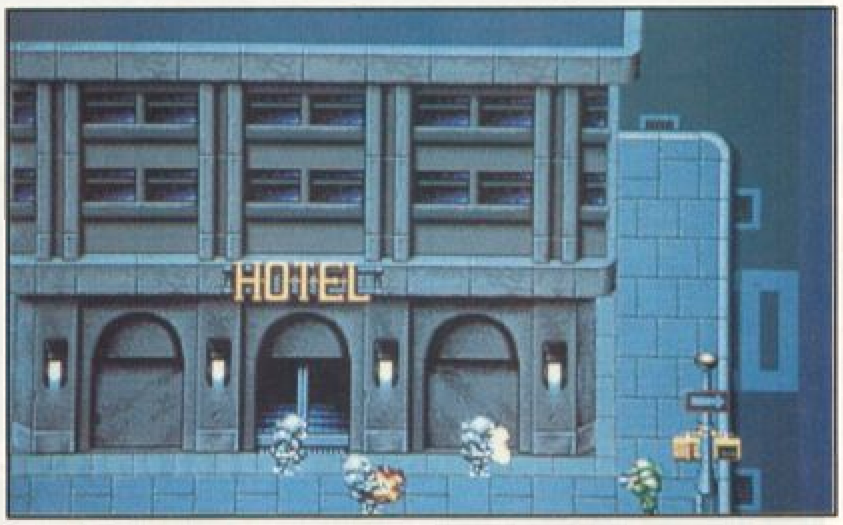
BAT II *UbiSoft*



UbiSoft's original BAT may only have achieved reasonable success over here in the UK, but in its country of origin it went down an absolute storm when it was released way back when. It's such success that has now prompted this much-vaunted sequel, which promises to capture the original spirit of the bizarre futuristic RPG/adventure epic, but in a much more elaborate and sprawling fashion. It all takes place one a corrupt alien planet, with the player taking the role of a maverick secret agent trying to get to the bottom of a top-level conspiracy. The adventure element is as strong as ever, comprising over 200 screens of puzzles, clues and what have you, and there's a strong arcade element too - along the way the player finds himself partaking in high-speed car chases, street fights and even gladatorial combat! The graphics are typically French - ie very stylish and pretty (if a little odd in places), and we're promised a revolutionary new sound system that apparently does wonders for the game atmosphere. Bullish claims indeed - we'll get the proof of the pudding in the Spring, when Bat II hits the ST, Amiga and PC.

BODYCOUNT *Strangeways*

Alright, alright, we know we did something on this last month, but we thought you might like to have a look at this latest version, because with all the sexy new graphics it's looking much better now. Thank God.



A320

A·I·R·B·U·S

...has landed.

developed in cooperation with

Lufthansa and Deutsche Airbus

ARCADE BLAST

SWIV (Storm)

The follow-up to *Silkworm* succeeds through a combination of frenetic speed, polished presentation and sheer, unadulterated action. Tons and tons of it. The firepower and wastage on screen is of a level that far exceeds anything offered before. A £25 coin-op with no coins!

ARCADE ADVENTURE

GODS (Renegade)

While it may be argued that it's not as intrinsically sophisticated as the likes of *Rick Dangerous 2* or *Prince of Persia*, the Bitmap Brothers' platform opus does offer enough fully-rounded arcade action to make it the outright winner in this category. Classy and depthy.

ROLE PLAYING GAMES

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER (US Gold/SSI)

By the mighty sword of Kring! SSI's latest *Dungeons and Dragons* game takes the best bits of *Dungeon Master*, adds a few more its own, stirs well, and the result is the best yet for gamers into the whole fantasy genre. Will SSI rule the RPG land forever?

SPORTS ARCADE

KICK OFF 2 (Anco)

What can we say? It's pretty pointless trying to explain to the initiated what makes Kick Off 2 so damned playable, but the primary reasons are untra-instrinctive ball control mode and remarkable speed which combine to make it as exciting as the real game!

STRATEGY

CIVILIZATION (Microprose)

Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon is deposed as the strategy benchmark by - would you believe it - another game by Sid Meier! This awesome strategy epic has the player leading a race of people through technological and cultural expansion as the civilisation develops through the ages. Heavyweight stuff, and a work of undisputed genius.

ADVENTURE

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND (US Gold/Lucasfilm)

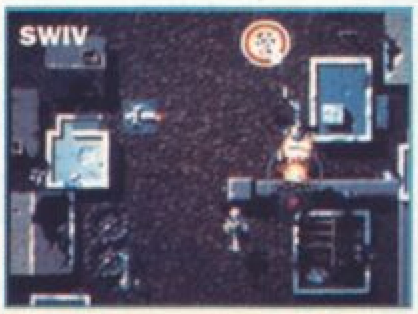
Partly due to the new refined version of the SCUMM adventure system and partly due to the excellent, and very funny script, this is the most engaging and entertaining adventure game for years. But will Monkey Island 2 take its crown?

ACE BENCHMARKS

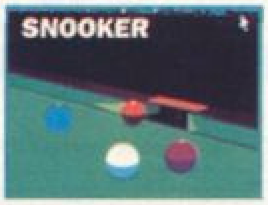
The games listed here are the very best of their particular genre. The benefits of your being fully acquainted with our Benchmarks are twofold.

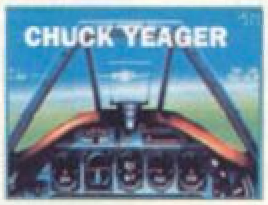
The Benchmarks provide a solid reference point when it comes to games buying time. By glancing at our description of the benchmark, you'll be able to decide if particular differences in the new game's design would make the new title more or less appealing for you.

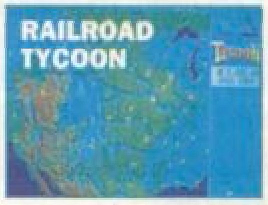
Also, no software collection is complete unless it contains *all* the games listed here. If you're missing any of these titles, go and remedy the situation immediately.

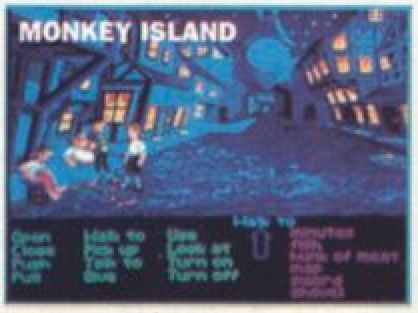


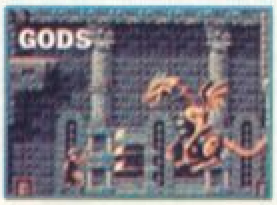
FORMULA ONE
GRAND PRIX











RACING SIMULATION

FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX (Microprose)

A new Benchmark! So perfect it's almost impossible to find any fault in this awesome game from Geoff Crammond. Packed with helpful pointers for novices and lots of detail for experienced racers, it will keep you driving for *years*.

BEAT'EM UP

IK+ (System 3)

An upgraded and enhanced version of the original System 3 classic, Archer Maclean's IK+ is still unchallenged in its field after three years. Its most innovative spect is the addition of a third, computer controlled fighter. Incredible speed and subgames.

RACING GAME

STUNT CAR RACER (Microstyle)

Stunt Car Racer packs polygon-plotting power and arcade-speed thrills into a novel formula. Drive around elevated raceways, smashing and crashing your opponent into oblivion. Growling audio and a weird look add novelty value to this class title.

SPORTS SIMULATION

JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER (Virgin)

Archer Maclean does it again, and must go down in the history books as having produced the first ever realistic snooker game. Tremendous 3D combines with authentic play and more options than ever believed possible. An awesomely good game.

SIMULATION

CHUCK YEAGER'S AIR COMBAT(Electronic Arts)

The third game to be endorsed by the barrier-breaking General takes place in a far more enjoyable combat arena. You get to fly every plane you've ever dreamt of and you get to fight every plane you ever thought of too. And all in super sprite'n'polygons graphics!

ACTION STRATEGY

MEGA lo MANIA (Image Works)

Sensible Software's first attempt at strategy is a surprisingly successful one. At first glance, it may seem similar to *Populous*, but further inspection reveals it to be a genuinely original strategy epic. But will *Populous 2*, due next month, end Mega's brief reign

PUZZLE GAME

TETRIS (Nintendo)

There are more official versions of this classic than can be counted on the legs of a millipede. But it's Nintendo's own Gameboy version that is undoubtedly the best. Line up blocks in frenetic black & white action May sound dull but is actually fantastic.

PLATFORM

SUPER MARIO WORLD (Nintendo)

The sooner they release the Famicom over here the better, as that will give more chance to experience the stunning fourth instalment in the saga. Sheer perfection from start to end of its ninety-nine levels! By the way, have you seen that advert with Mario reading the news? It's good isn't it? He's better than that Sega git anyday.

SHEKHANA CONSOLES

SHEKHANA HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED SINCE 1978. WE ARE THE OLDEST ESTABLISHED COMPANY IN C&VG, HAVING BEEN ADVERTISING EVERY MONTH SINCE 1984. DON'T BE LET DOWN THIS YEAR OUR PAST HISTORY IS OUR GUARANTEE.

081-340 8565

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS

★★NINTENDO FAMICOM★★

Famicom - Scart - VR3	199.99	Castlevania 4	P.O.A
Famicom Scart + 2 Games	279.99	Darius Twin	44.99
Famicon Pal I - VR.3	224.99	Dodgeball	44.99
Famicom Pal I + 2 Games	299.99	* F-Zero	39.99
(any 2 games up to £45 each)		* Final Fight	44.99
Famicom Scart version 3. + Sony TV/Monitor or Philips 8833 MK11 Monitor	449.99	Geoman Warrior	44.99
		Ghouls & Ghost - Aval Now	49.99
		* Gradius III	39.99
Scart Lead External	29.99	Hyperball	44.99
Audio Lead	19.99	Jerry Boy	44.99
Control Pad	9.99	Joe &Mac	49.99
Philips 8833 MK11/1084 Lead	19.99	* Pilot Wing	44.99
		* Populous	44.99
J.B. King Joystick	69.99	* R-Type	44.99
Autofire controller	19.99	* Sim City	44.99
Autofire Pad	19.99	Super E.D.S	44.99
USA Games Adaptor	29.99	Super Mario 4	44.99
* Actraiser	39.99	Pro Soccer - Kick Off	39.99
* Baseball	44.99	Super Tennis	44.99
Big Run	44.99	* UN Squadron	44.99
Drakkhen - USA Only	49.99	* AVAILABLE IN USA VERSION	49.99
Caveman Ninja	P.O.A		

AVAILABLE NOW FAMICOM VERSION.3 FOR IMPROVED DEFINATION AND QUALITY PICTURE. PLEASE NOTE VERSION.3 FAMICOMS ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT ANY OTHER OUTLETS, IT IS ONLY AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVE TO SHEKHANA

★★SEGA MEGADRIVE★★
★★IMPORTED VERSION★★

OFFER ONE

MEGADRIVE + CONTROL PAD + POWER SUPPLY UNIT

★★£109.99★★

OFFER TWO

SEGA MEGADRIVE + PAD + PSU + ANY TWO JAPANESE GAMES UP TO THE VALUE OF £24.99 + MEGADRIVE CONVERTOR WORTH £9.99

★★£149.99★★ SAVE £30

★★ABOVE OFFERS ARE FOR THE XMAS PERIOD ONLY★★

U.K. Official Megadrive	124.99
Arcade Power Stick	39.99
Control Pad	12.99
Megadrive Convertor	9.99

CD Rom Available Soon

SOFTWARE	JAP VERSION	UK VERSION
Airwolf	24.99	-
Alien Storm	29.99	34.99
Altered Beast	24.99	34.99
Bare Knuckles	39.99	39.99
Blockout	-	19.99
Buster Douglas Boxing	-	34.99
Crackdown	24.99	34.99
Curse	24.99	-
Darius II	34.99	-
Degap Attack	-	36.99
Devil Crush	34.99	-
Dynamite Duke	24.99	34.99
D.J Boy	24.99	29.99
El Viento	34.99	-
Eswat	24.99	29.99
E.A Ice Hockey	-	34.99
F22 Interceptor	-	34.99
Gairies	29.99	-
Ghouls + Ghosts	34.99	39.99
Ghostbusters	24.99	-
Golden Axe	29.99	29.99
Hardball	-	24.99
Immortal	-	34.99
Insector X	24.99	-
Ka Ge Ki	29.99	-
Last Battle	24.99	29.99
Legend of Riden	29.99	-
Marble Land	29.99	-
Mercs	34.99	-
Mickey Mouse	24.99	34.99
Moonwalker	24.99	29.99
Outrun	34.99	-
PGA Golf	-	34.99
Phantasy Star III	-	49.99
Rastan Saga 2	24.99	-
Road Rash	-	34.99
Saint Sword	29.99	39.99
Shining + Darkness	-	49.99
Sonic Hedgehog	29.99	34.99
Strider	29.99	39.99
Sword of Sodan	-	24.99
Toe Jam & Earl	-	31.99
Wrestle War	34.99	34.99
Zany Golf	-	24.99

★★NINTENDO GAMEBOY★★

GAMEBOY + BATTERIES + HEADPHONES + FREE PROTECTOR

£59.99

AS ABOVE + ANY GAME YOU LIKE + GAMEBOY PROTECTOR

ONLY £79.99

GAMEBOY DELUXE SET + FREE PROTECTOR
INC TETRIS + 2 PLAYER LEAD

£69.99

2 - Player Cable	9.99	Replacement Joystick	4.99
AC/DC Power Supply	9.99	Amplifier	9.99
Battery Recharger Pack	26.99	Large Carry all Case	19.99
Gameboy Protector	9.99	Light Boy (Mag + Light)	19.99
Case Boy (Hard)	12.99	G.Boy Pouch	10.99
Leather Case	19.99	Tote Hard Case	14.99
Repacement Lens	4.99		

Baseball, Batman, Bill and Ted, Boomers Adventure, Bubble Bobble, Bubble Ghost, Castelvania II, Cattrap, Daedalian Opus, Dragons Lair, Duck Tales, F1 Racer , Gauntlet II, Hal Wrestling, In Your Face, Kung Fu Master, Mercenary Force, Mickey Mouse, Ninja Boy, Operation Contra, Paperboy, Pipedream, Princes Blobette, Robocop, R-Type, Sneaky Snakes, Turtles, WWf Wrestling

Ring for further titles

ALL ABOVE HAVE ENGLISH INSTRUCTIONS
ALL £24.99 EACH, ANY 2 FOR £45.00, ANY THREE FOR £65.00
JAPANESE GAMES AVAILABLE

★★ATARI LYNX★★

Lynx System II	84.99	Viking Child	29.99
Ninja Gaiden	29.99	Chequered Flag	29.99
Warbirds	29.99	Turbo Sub	29.99
Pacland	29.99	Battery Recharger Pack	49.99

★★NEO - GEO★★

Neo - Geo Complete System Scart of AV Pal I System	349.99
Control Stick	49.99
Software from	99.99

★★SEGA GAMEGEAR★★

GAMEGEAR SYSTEM PLUS
FREE PROTECTOR WORTH £9.99

£99.99

GAMEGEAR + ANY GAME

£119.99

GAMEGEAR ADAPTOR
★★AVAILABLE NOW★★

LETS YOU RUN MASTER SYSTEM GAMES ON YOUR GAMEGEAR £24.99

AC/DC Power Supply	9.99	Leaderboard	24.99
Battery Pack	39.99	Mickey Mouse	24.99
G.Gear Protector	9.99	Ninja Gaiden	24.99
2-Player Cable	9.99	Outrun	24.99
G.G Carry Case	19.99	Pacman	24.99
G.G Deluxe Case	24.99	Putter Golf	19.99
Widegear - Glass	14.99	Rastan Saga	24.99
Widegear - Plastic	10.99	Sninobi	24.99
Dragon Crystal	24.99	Strider	24.99
Factory Panic	24.99	Solotaire	24.99
Fantasy Zone	24.99	Space Harrier	24.99
Galaga	24.99	Wonder Boy	24.99
G-Loc	24.99	Woody Pop	24.99
Joe Montana	24.99		

★★PC ENGINE★★

PC ENGINE - CORE GRAFF PAL I VERSION	**£139.99**
PC ENGINE PORTABLE GT	**£199.99**

RING FOR SOFTWARE

RETAIL STORE/MAIL ORDER INFORMATION

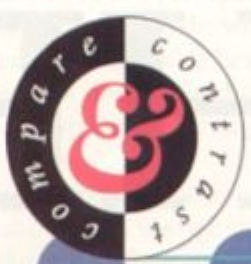
RETAIL STORE: 2, GLADSTONE HOUSE, HIGH ROAD, WOOD GREEN
N22 0AA (Corner of Gladstone Ave) (100 yards Wood Green Tube Stn)
(On Piccidilly Line) Tel: 081 889 9412 Fax: 081 889 9413.

257/259 TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD,
LONDON W1 9AB.
TEL: 071 631 4627

ABOVE PRICES ARE MAIL ORDER ONLY.
MAIL ORDER: CHEQUE/P.O TO: SCS (ACE), 655 GREEN LANES,
LONDON N8 0QY. TEL: 081 340 8565

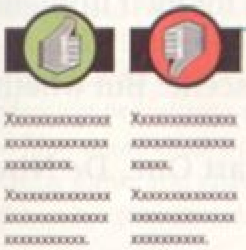
P&P ADD 75P FOR SOFTWARE, £5 FOR MACHINES. 3-5 DAYS, NEXT DAY £10. TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE OUR PRICES WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. E&OE.

SCREENTEST



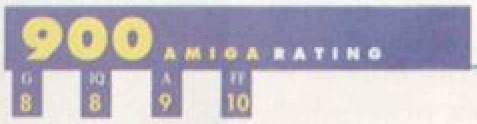
Welcome! Welcome one and all to a thoroughly awesome reading experience. You are about to enter the ACE Screentest section, the most detailed and trustworthy reviewing system in the universe!

Every word of the review is intended to help *you* decide whether the game is for you or not. The body text is combined with a plethora of handy icons to offer at-a-glance information.

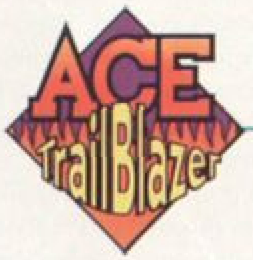


Each game is compared and contrasted to another title as an easy frame of reference. Most commonly, it will be compared to the best its particular genre.

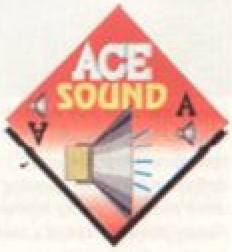
The Thumbs up and Down box details particular elements which may or may not appeal - the toughness of the bad guys, number of levels, long-term appeal etc.

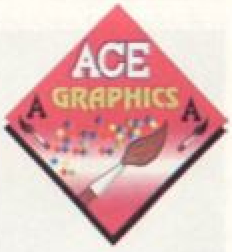


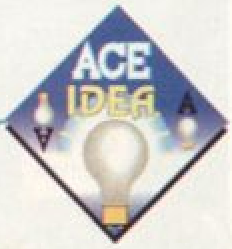
The ACE Rating – a score out of 1,000 – is the most instant gauge of the quality of the game.



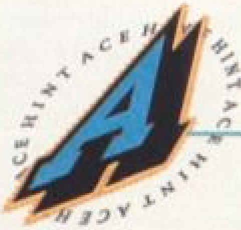
An ACE Trailblazer award goes to games scoring over 900. These are recommended without hesitation. They are "must buys".



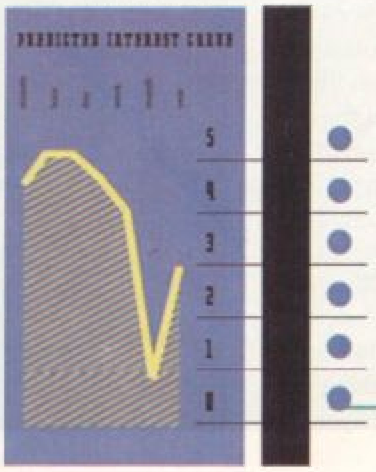




Titles which excel in a particular area also stand the chance of being awarded a Sound, Graphics or Idea award (for innovation).



There's even beginners' hints to get you through the early stages should you buy the game that month and can't wait for our detailed tips the following issue.

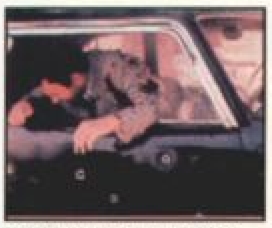


Finally, the PIC curve details our feelings as to the longevity of the game.

Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher US Gold
Developer Creative Materials
Price £25.99

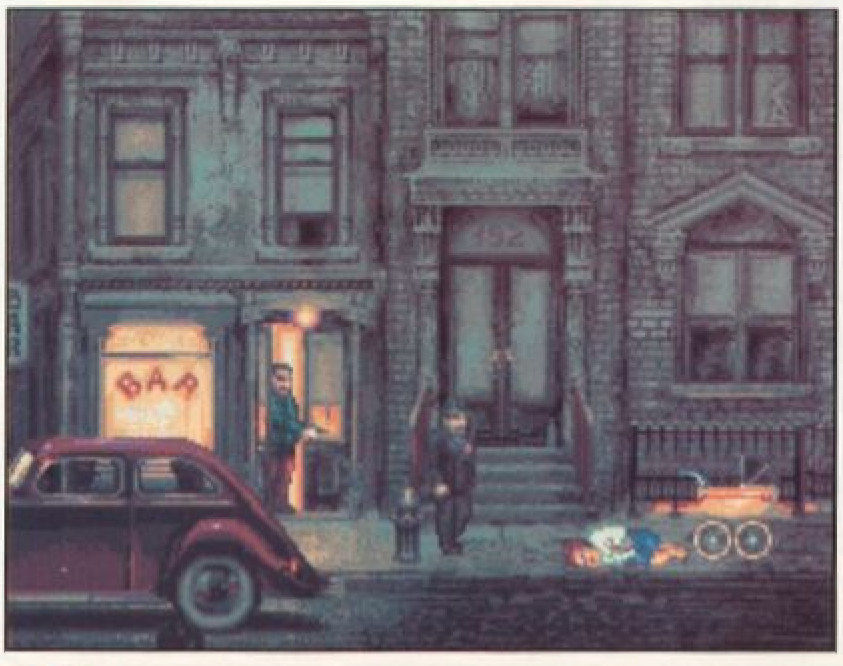
THE GODFATHER

For all the poncy critics' drivel about the Corleone family serving as a microcosm of American society, we all know that the Godfather movies are best remembered for their immensely stylised portrayal of mob violence. Everybody's got a favourite Godfather scene. But whether it's the toll-booth machine gunning of James Caan's Sonny Corleone in Part One, De Niro's tea-towel antics inTwo or Andy Garcia's steel-nutted killing of Joey Zasa's hit men in Part Three, the common factor uniting everyone's fave sequences is that there's always plenty of claret flying about.



Hardly the best way to begin. Even for rough, tough mobsters, there are very definite rules about gunning down innocent young mothers. Family Standing takes a knock for this miscalculation.

Let's face it, for all its social metaphor and nice sets, The Godfather series is more about spivvy suits and tommy guns than anything else. So it isn't perhaps as peculiar as it may first appear that US Gold have opted to make their first Godfather release an action game. A second project, an adventure in fact, is currently being developed by Delphine (Cruise for a Corpse, Another World) Software and is slated for an Autumn '92 release. So while the French beaver away trying to evoke period atmosphere and menace for their title, we are presented with a scrolling shoot-'em-up from the hands of Creative Materials.



All licence properties carry a certain amount of negative baggage. For all the extra points which the software publisher will earn through attaching a popular name to their game, there are the inevitable problems. Maybe the actors from the movie won't have their likenesses portrayed in computer form. Maybe the heroes from the film aren't allowed to harm anyone in their computer incarnation lest it adversely affect their wholesome image, and so on.

Here, unfortunately, US Gold seem to have had to weather the entire gamut of these problems, parting with a considerable chunk of change for little more than the name. There's none of the music from the films. None of the scenes from the movies. None of the plot. Aside from the title screen, there are no likenesses of any of the characters. The shoot outs take place in barber-shops, casinos and mansions which bear little or no resemblance to any Godfather location. And even the tag-line for the movie; "Real power can't be given. It must be taken" has become "You don't ask for power... You take it!" for the game.

Instead, the game's relation to the storyline of the film comes down to its sequences taking place in the appropriate city in the appropriate year and

little else. So it's best to view The Godfather as a period shoot-'em-up rather than an interpretation of the movie. Still, that black & white logo of the hand pulling the puppet strings was worth every penny...

New York, 1947. The war abroad is over, but new battles are taking place at home. Everyone is out to secure a patch of territory. Like you, they dream of their own business empire, of stability and wealth for their families, of power. And they're going to fight for it. They're so keen to fight for it, in fact, that simply walking about in the wrong area can get a guy killed. An undeniably beautiful opening sequence pans over a night-time cityscape, a serene backdrop for the carnage to follow.

Controlling the apprentice Don with the joystick, the player must successfully reach the right hand end of the street dodging bullets from gangsters and being careful not to injure innocent bystanders when returning fire. Even crossing the street is a dangerous affair, since mobsters in cars cruise by and try to run the Don down. The Godfather is split into two shoot-'em-up styles. The bulk of the game takes place in scrolling side-on view, while intermediate sequences are depicted in Operation Wolf style first-person perspective.

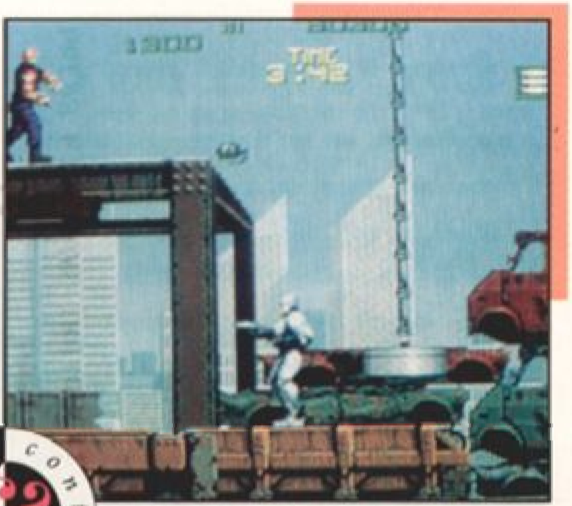
Even on the first level, life for the aspiring Don is tough. Bullets are sprayed from passing cars, nondescript pedestrians suddenly pull guns and blast him, doors creak open revealing men with machine guns, and shadowy characters throw bricks on his poor criminal head.

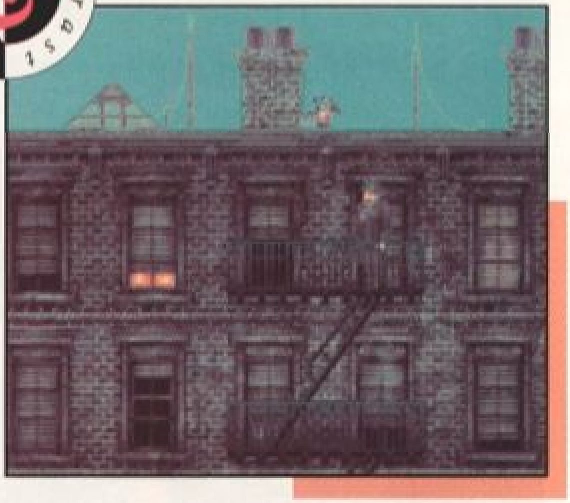
compare & contrast

Phew. Isn't life a funny thing? The game format closest to that of The Godfather, a period gangster movie, is Robocop, a sci-fi cop film. They're both predominantly scrolling shoot-outs with intermediate stages. Ker-razy! Anyway, while both games offer some good side-on blasting, the Godfather takes place along one plane, with only a couple of up-the-steps situations, whereas Robocop took place on a more up n' down basis.

And the stairway antics in Godfather aren't as strong as they could be. There's no stopping half way up the steps to return fire. However, Godfather has more variety than Robocop during the main game, with huge cars cruising by and a greater selection of bad guys plugging away at the hero.

Godfather also wins out on the sonic front with superb period tunes, even if they aren't from the film.





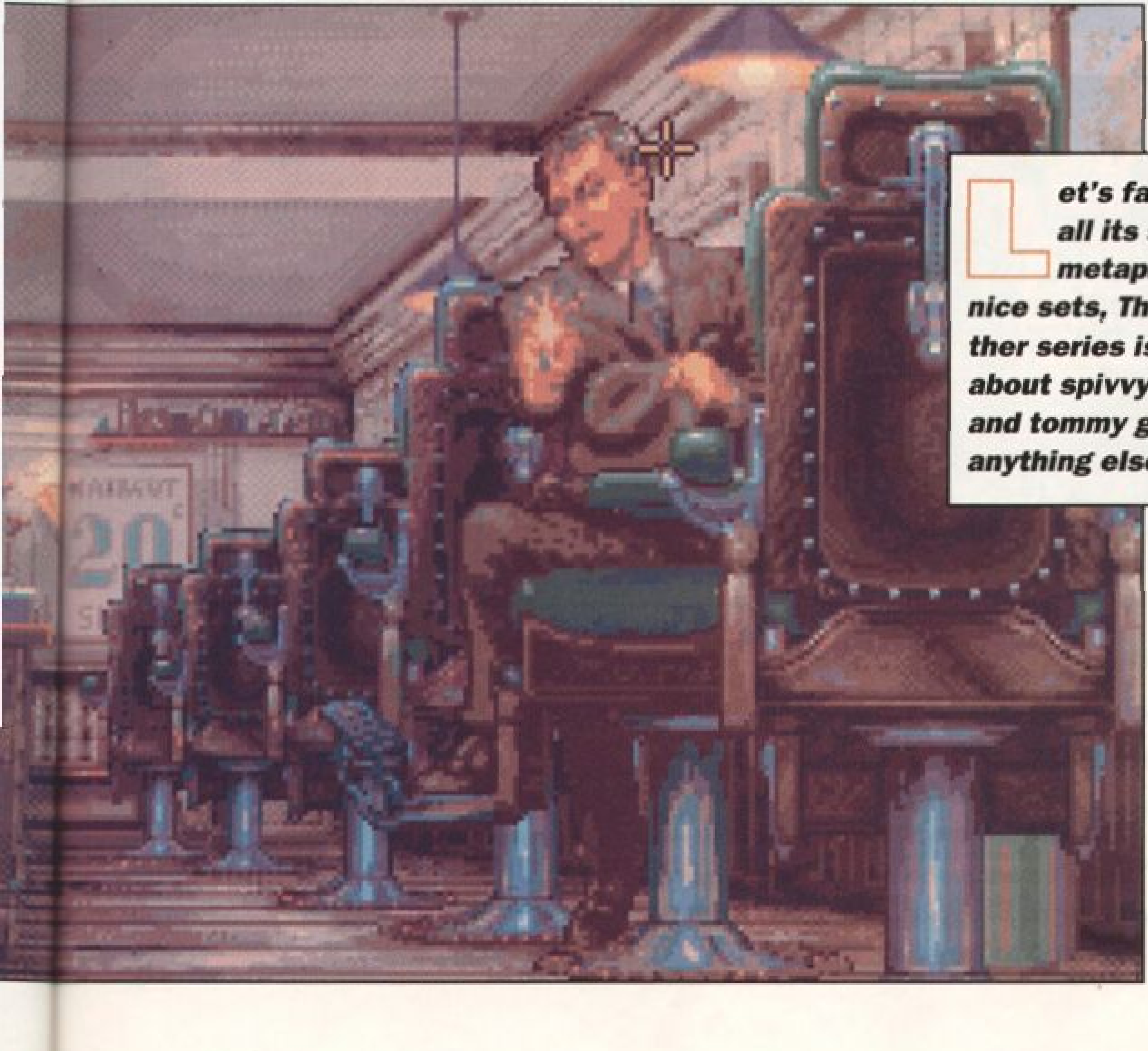
Now let's get something straight immediately, the graphics in Godfather are superb. The backdrops are fantastic and atmospheric and even the characters sit well in their environment, rather than looking like paste-on graphic blocks. While most impressive in the Operation Wolf pop-up scenes, even the scrollers look pretty amazing.

The player's success is measured in two ways, each represented by a gauge at the top of the screen. The simplest is the player's strength, which gradually gets eroded as he takes hits throughout the level, and can be replenished with first-aid kits yielded by plugging certain baddies. The second factor is your Family Standing which is an altogether more complicated affair.

While it's easy enough for a player to understand that incoming bullets will damage his health, and thus is rarely surprised when the funeral scene appears, the game-ending fate of being disowned by The Family occurs at constantly surprising junctures. Family Standing is increased by killing mobsters, and is decreased by killing civilians or Policemen. Fair enough.

However, so keen are the Family that they become feared and respected, that they take a dim view of the player who tries to coast through the level without offing rival hoods, and points from the family standing reserve will be gradually drained away as the game progresses, making it impossible for players to win without some comprehensive killing.

▶42



Let's face it, for all its social metaphor and nice sets, The Godfather series is more about spivvy suits and tommy guns than anything else.

HOT IN THE CITY!

It certainly is, and any hoodlum who has wise ideas about taking over and becoming the Don without learning the ways of the street is in for a rude awakening.

The bulk of The Godfather is made up of scrolling street scenes, just like the ones shown on this page. And it's a tribute to the abilities of the graphic designers at Creative Materials that they've managed to create a believable gangster scenario, reminiscent in many ways of the Godfather movies with absolutely no reference to the films at all, save that of the Corleone name.

The presentation of The Godfather is superb, but it's far from being a case of a flashy surface disguising a grubby game underneath. The game is a solid, action-packed and exciting, if none too original, shoot-'em-up.

In order to help you fully enjoy the game's atmosphere, we invite you to hop aboard the ACE tourbus as we visit New York in 1947 and - thanks to the miracles of time travel - Miami ten years later, with a couple of hints along the way.

Level One

New York, 1947

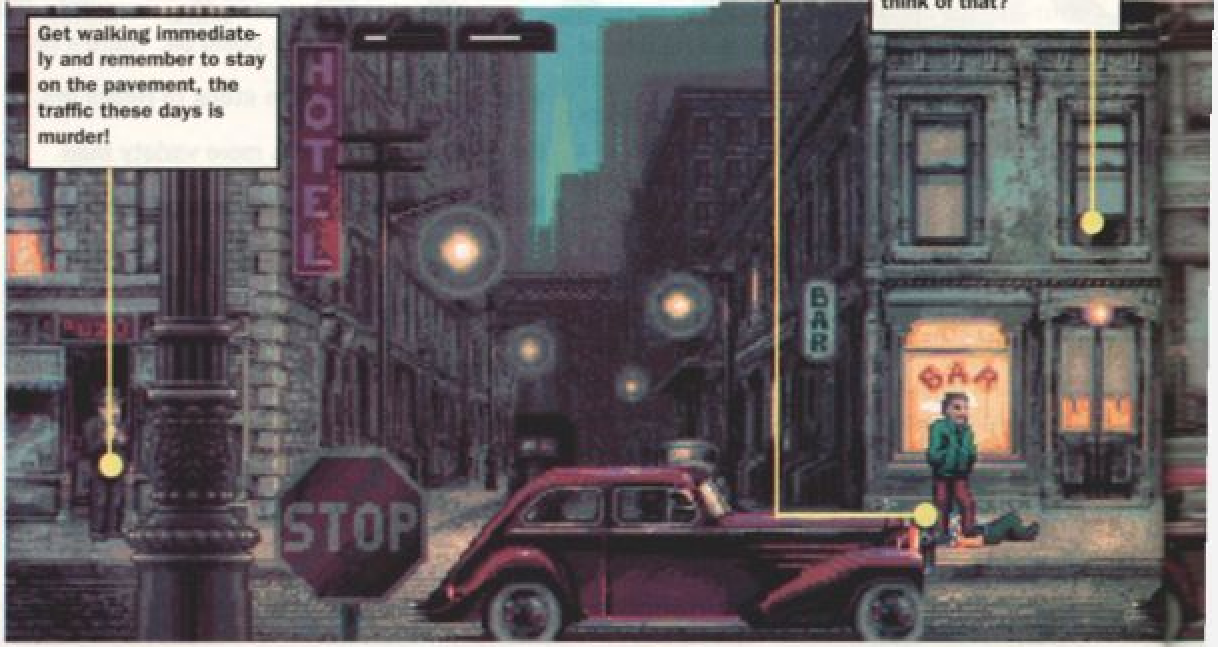
Fresh back from the war, the player is out to make his name as a figure to be both feared and respected. And what better way than by plugging some unsuspecting schnooks.

The first killing. Guy never knew what hit him. There he was, dancin' around like he was somethin' special, when Bingo! - you pop him in the back of the head with a .32

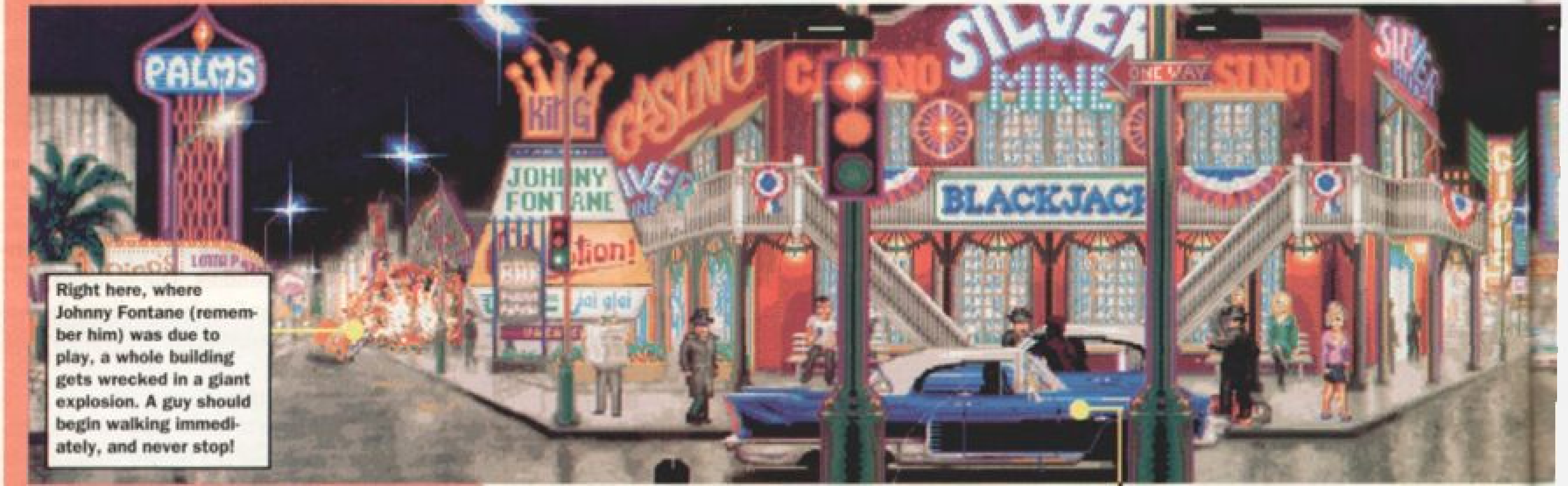
To be fair, the guys in the blue shirts like this poor sap are unarmed, but insist on coming on strong with their fists. But what is this, the Queensbury rules or something? Nah. Catch 'em with a slug as soon as they show their faces.

Now, these windows may look innocent enough, but believe me, a guy can get hisself wacked just by standing around underneath them. This particular pair of windows houses a couple of crack shots.

They like nothing better than to lean over the balcony and machine gun people to death in the street. Whaddya think of that?



Get walking immediately and remember to stay on the pavement, the traffic these days is murder!



Right here, where Johnny Fontane (remember him) was due to play, a whole building gets wrecked in a giant explosion. A guy should begin walking immediately, and never stop!

Level Two

Miami, 1957

If you thought life as an apprentice Don was ugly ten years ago, you should see things now! Guys aren't content with wacking each other in provate anymore. Now it's got to be a big thing.

A continual problem faced by all hoods is that of the Drive-By. That is, a bunch of rival hoods cruise past in a car and spray machine-gun fire into a bunch of people, hoping to catch the guy they're after.

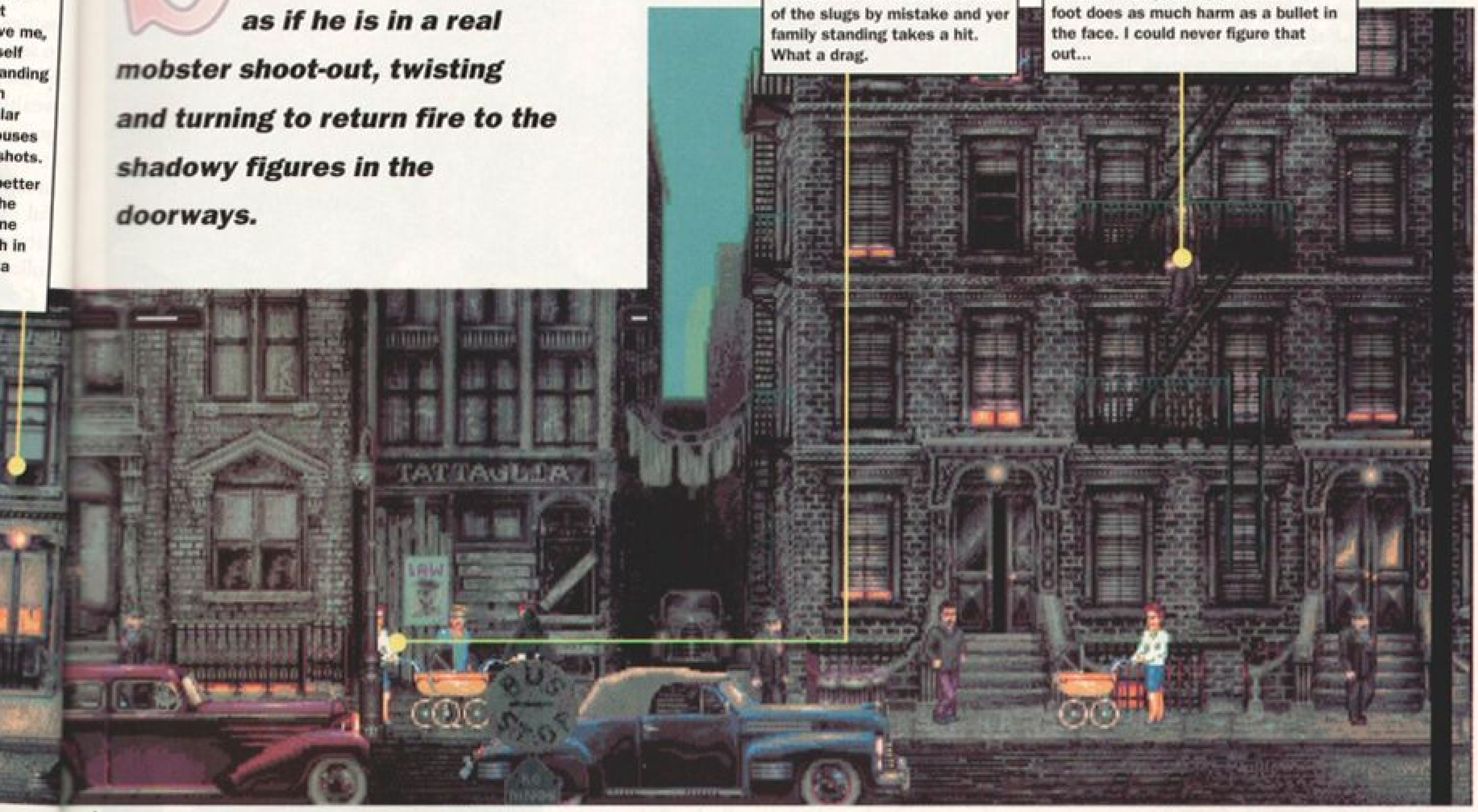
Even today we have to face the same problem. So when ya hear that rat-a-tat sound and see a fella leaning out of the window in his Chevvy, don't figure that he's drumming on the windshield to get your attention, hit the tarmac, pronto.

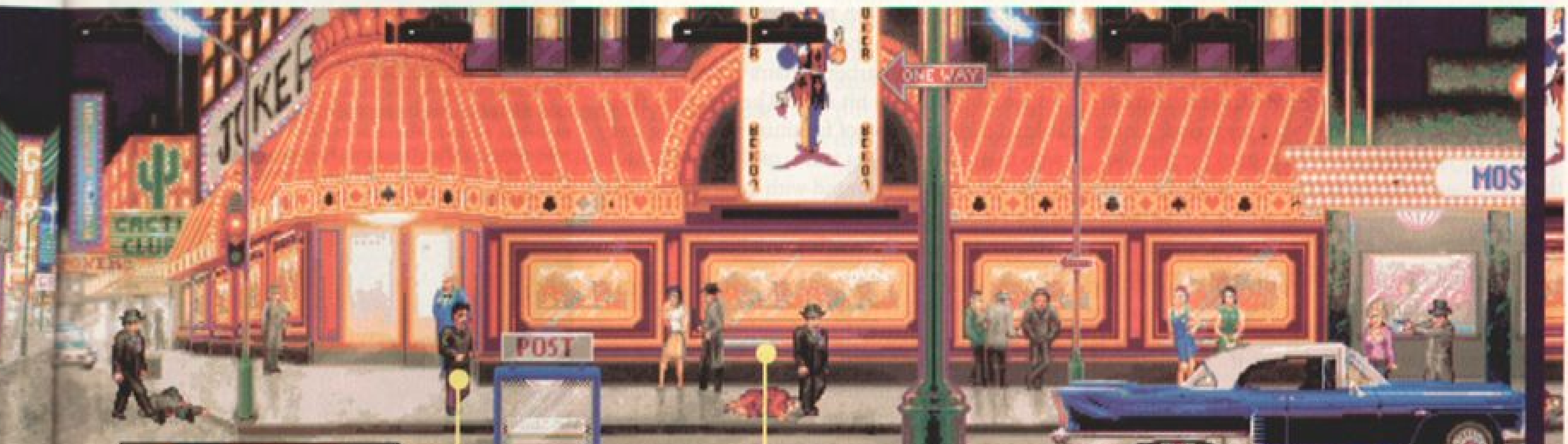
ows
t
ve me,
self
anding
n
lar
uses
shots.
etter
he
ne
h in
a

So well balanced is the action that the player will occasionally feel as if he is in a real mobster shoot-out, twisting and turning to return fire to the shadowy figures in the doorways.

Broads, huh? Nothing but trouble. While they may be full of good intentions, they certainly show up at the most inconvenient moments. Like here for example. Ya can't risk blowing away the guy in the blue shirt in case the dame catches one of the slugs by mistake and yer family standing takes a hit. What a drag.

Like any guy who knows the streets will tell ya, never climb any stairs that you don't have to. Unfortunately, if you're gonna get the screen to scroll on to the next part of the level, you need to get to the top of the building. Watch out for the bozo dropping bricks off of the roof, since a brick on the foot does as much harm as a bullet in the face. I could never figure that out...





The bad guys are getting smarter all the time. Look at this goon, all weaving and bobbing around the screen, being a genuine pain in the ass to shoot. What's the solution? Simple.

Crouch down on the floor and holf down a diagonal right with the joystick. Then hold fire and loose off a bunch of shots in his direction. Don't get all in a panic if he turns around to return fire; he needs to be shot twice to be killed and he can't hit you when you're crouched down.

Can you believe it?! They're even getting women to do their dirty work for them these days. She may look like a sweet old granny but she's as deadly as any man you'll meet in the game.

As soon as you see one of these twisted old critters, put a slug between their shoulder blades and you'll be doing the world a favour.

Okay, from here on you're on your own, kid. Just remember what I've told you and remember to keep the bullets out of the innocent bystanders, you never know when you may need to ask a favour of them...

Amiga version

A six-disk shoot-em-'up?! Who are they kidding? Well no-one, in fact. For players intent on enjoying Godfather in all its graphic glory quite an inordinate amount of swapping is necessary. There's a different sequence for both death and being disowned by the family, each requiring a separate load. These sequences can be turned off for players keen to simply press on with the action. The sound throughout the game is fantastic, with great spot effects such as subway trains and gas-guzzling autos rumbling past. So despite the swapping, a big thumbs-up. Shame about the lack of a mouse option though.

PC version

With the finishing touches being added to the PC version even as I type, IBM owners can look forward to a thoroughly enjoyable bout of New Year blasting thanks to their hard-drive completely removing all those loading delay niggles. Musical accompaniment promises to be superb, and both Ad-Lib and Sound Blaster boards are to be supported.

ST version

Promising an equally huge number of disks as the Amiga version, and with no Meg to help loading, an ST version should be with us by the Spring.

39▶ It takes a little playing before it becomes clear that Godfather is a cut above the regular arcade blast. Little touches such as the demands for violence en masse tempered by the presence of innocent bystanders and policemen to kerb unnecessarily trigger-happy play help a great deal. Since the enemy mobsters have no regard for the law, they will continue to blast away regardless of whether there is a copper around or not. Our hero, on the other hand, has to be considerably more careful, holding fire until the police are out of range.

So well-balanced is the shooting that on occasion the player will really feel as if he is in a mobster shoot out, twisting and turning to return fire to the shadowy figures in the doorways. Sometimes the bullets are coming in from so many different directions that the player must simply stand still and watch the landscape in order to identify the location of the bad guys, or re-trace the bullets' flight back to their owners' guns.

Within a pretty restrictive framework, Creative Materials have produced an enjoyable, no-nonsense shoot-'em-up.

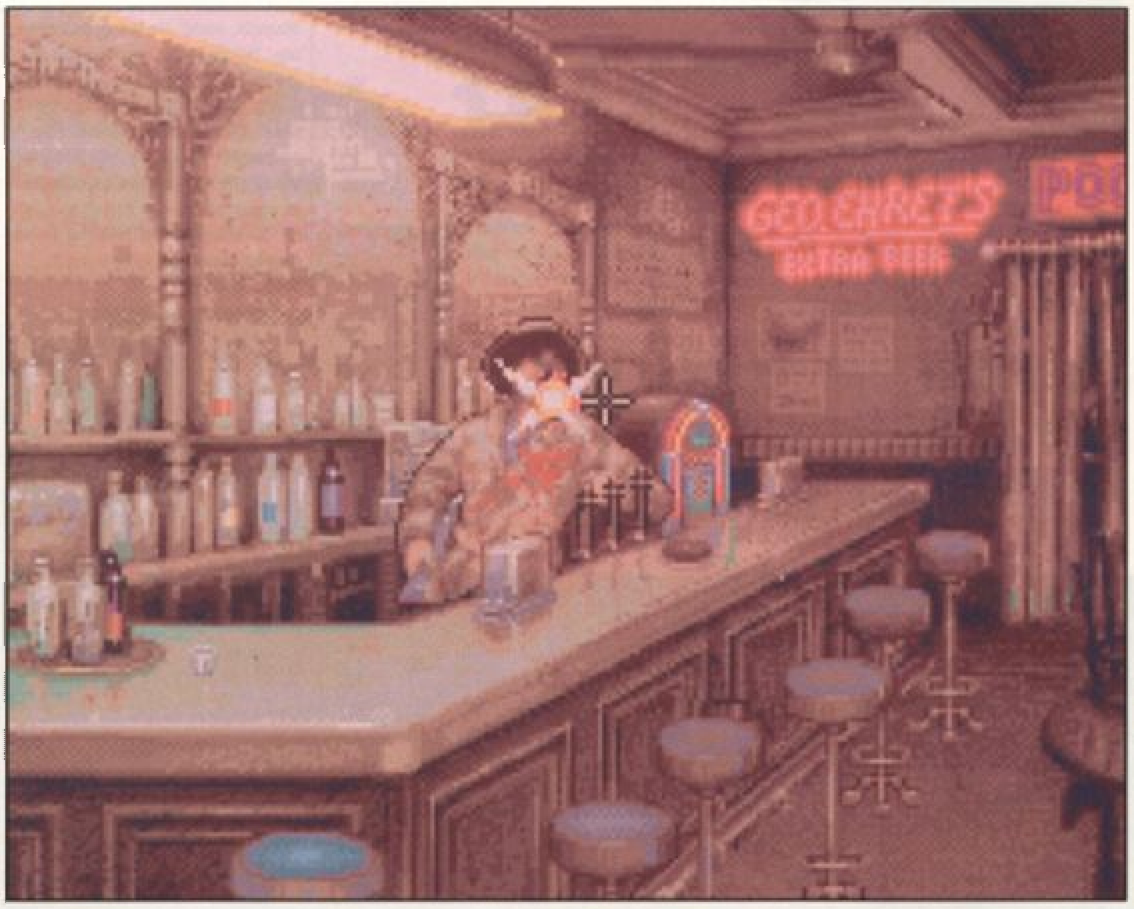
Before the obligatory end-of-level fiend (a bloke with a slightly more ferocious machine-gun than anyone else) must be dispatched, the player has to climb up a fire escape in a vertical-scrolling section. This bit isn't quite so impressive, since once the stick has been pushed up to make him climb the ladder or the fire escape itself, he can't be turned around. Thus, once the player begins his ascent of a ladder, he is completely vulnerable to incoming shots. Also the animation of the hero shinning up the ladder is a bit iffy, so let's move swiftly on to...

The first intermediate stages. Here the view switches to first-person perspective with the player aiming a cross-hair. These stages take place in a bar and a barbers; both equally deadly locations for an apprentice Don to enter. Hiding behind the bar and through the curtains, or sitting in the big spinny leather barber's chairs are murderous, impeccably dressed hit-men. They leap up from behind their bullet-proof furniture slamming away with their tommy guns and .45s. The player must guide his crosshair around with the joystick blasting all the while.

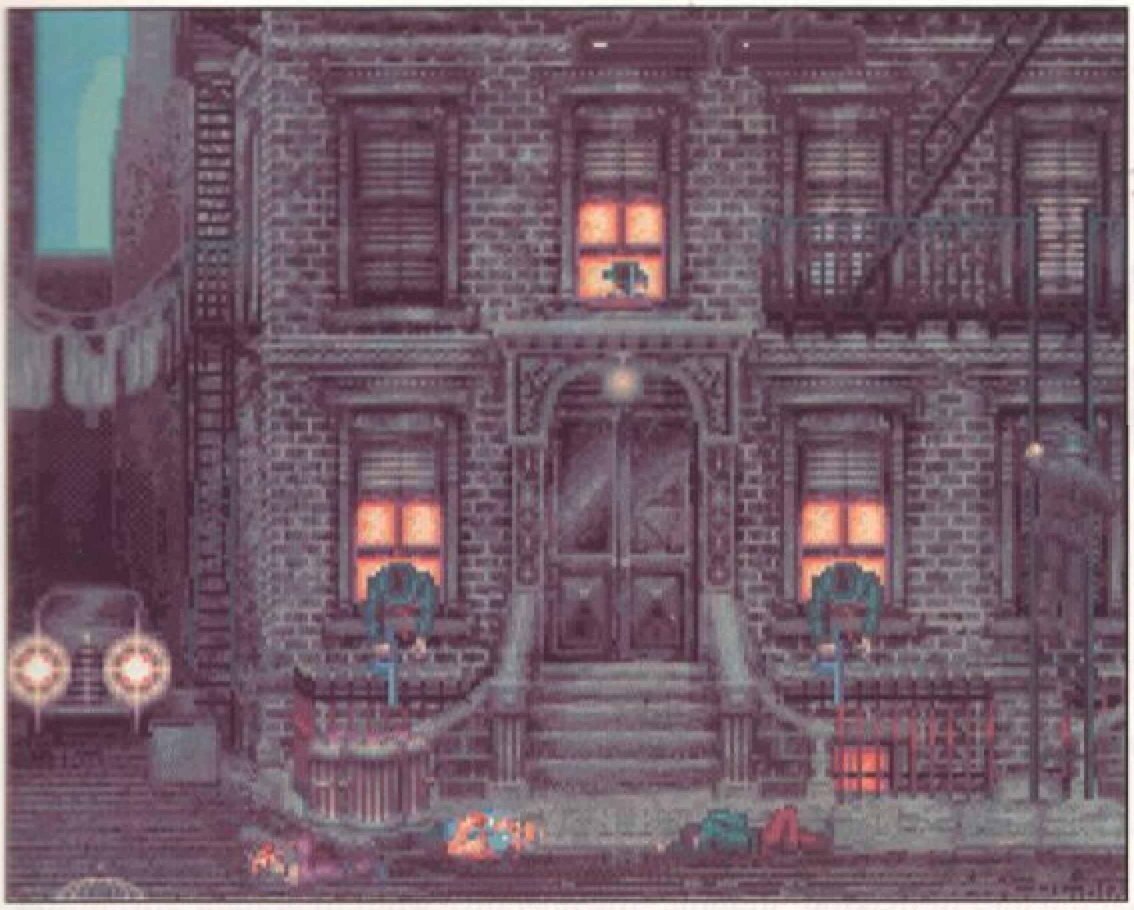
These scenes, although more robust looking than the scrollers, only last a couple of seconds. This is quite long enough, however, for a less than accurate marksman to have their life-force drained away to nothing. It's a shame there isn't a mouse-control option for these bits, as the stick-control doesn't exactly make for premium accuracy.

From here it's onto Las Vegas, and the pattern of the game becomes clear. That is, a scroller, two shoot-outs, a scroller, two shoot-outs. Spinning newspapers represent the tramp of time through the levels; New York, Las Vegas, Havana and Miami, finally ending up in the action-packed finale in a crime-boss' winter palace. Here, the apprentice Don faces his final test, to save the heads of all the crime families from death at the hands of mystery hit men aboard a helicopter.

This is by far the most impressive part of the game with the scrolling set up to give the impres-



The Godfather game, like the movie trilogy, is supposed to span thirty-five years in the life of the Corleone family and, in particular, Michael. Above, in Part One he's a mere slip of a lad while below, in Part Two he's a doddering old fool. In the game, the aging process isn't really tackled at all. A change of suit would have been quite nice.



(Left) A job well done. Kaput mobsters line the streets and dangle out of windows at the end of the first level. Corleone's first steps on the road to becoming a Don have been successful, and quite apart from that, he's quite a good shot too.

Albeit gruesome, the way the bodies fill up the streets and buildings gives a cinematic brutality to the game, and makes the player feel quite the hero.

JUST THE FACTS...

The Godfather series, perhaps more than any other movie is responsible for the sort of arguments in pubs that you wish you would win. The sort of trivia that everyone loves to be able to drop into conversation at a moment's notice (if they're a git) so, get cramming!

godfatherbeganfilmingin1971...francisfordcoppolawasthirtytwo...hehadneverdirectedapicturethatmadeanyprofit...paramountinsistedmarlonbrandohadascreentest...acinemashowingthefilmwasrobbedandthecrooksgotawaywith$13,000...coppolawasgivenaswankymercedes600byparamountexecs...godfatheronewasnominatedfor10academyawards...itgot3...godfatheronewastwohoursfiftysixminuteslong...onlythreequartersofgodfathertwoconcentratesonvito'slife...therestisaboutmichael...martinscorsesewasconsideredforthedirector'sjobontwo...denirogotthejobofyoungvitobecausecoppolareckonedhelookedalotlikebrandowhenhetestedforthefirstmovie...godfathertwowasroughcuttosixandahalfhours...

So there you are, every single fact that you ever wanted to know agbout all three Godfather films. No? Well, alright then, smart alec, why don't you get yourself down to your local bookstore and buy yourself a copy of The Godfather Companion, by Peter Biskind. Because it's got all the *really* interesting facts, figures and gossip on the Godfather movies, and it's a lot easier to read too!

sion of a 360° panorama. The helicopter hangs in the frosty air, shattering the silence of the Dons' pow-wow with deafening machine gun fire. Glass flies and crime bosses die in a pretty top-notch culmination of a great arcade game if not that great a licence.

My quibbles with The Godfather lie far more at the feet of the deal-makers rather than the production team. Within a pretty restrictive framework, Creative Materials have produced an enjoyable, no-nonsense shoot-'em-up. Graphically, it's breathtaking, and the action itself is fast and fun. But the feeling of being a bit short-changed on the Godfatheryness of the product just won't go away. Fine, while the time frame is appropriate to the movie, and the end of the game boasts a helicopter-attack similar to that of Joey Zasa's in the third movie (except here it takes place in a wintery country setting rather than in a skyscraper at night) and there's a strong enough 'gangster' theme, the fact is that you never feel as if you ARE a character from the movie.

A better approach, I reckon, would have been for the player to take the role of Vincent Mancini in an adaptation of the third film alone. The character is both well suited to the apprentice-don storyline, more appealing to the game's audience owing to his youth and more suited to shoot-'em-up scenes. It's a bit unrealistic to expect an aging character such as Michael to still be running around plugging bad guys with a machine gun.

At least with Robocop and The Terminator, you feel as if you ARE Robocop or The Terminator. Here, you're just a guy who wears the same suit for thirty-five years.

● Jim Douglas

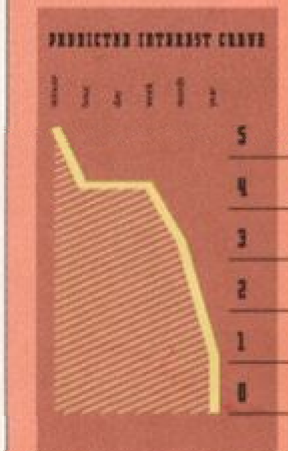
RATINGS

👍	👎
Lots of action. Great visuals. Superb music.	Slender movie connections. No mouse option for Op Wolf sections.

880 AMIGA RATING

G	IQ	A	IF
9	2	8	8

No shoot-em-'up can last forever, although Creative Materials have done a pretty solid job in making Godfather last longer than most. Aside from anything else, it's bloody (no pun intended) tough. There are two factors which, if allowed to slide, can put an end to the player's game. These make life interesting for a kick off. The lure of the superb graphics is stronger here than perhaps in any other shoot-out to date, pursuading the player to come back for yet another go. And even once the graphic novelty has worn off, the sheer difficulty of the game will provide challenge enough. At the risk of becoming a bore, I've got to say that the most negative factor the Godfather has to overcome is the negligible amount of connection the program has to the movie series itself. But if that isn't enough to put you off, it'll keep you happy for a fair old time.



Genre Adventure
Publisher Sierra
Developer In-house
Price £39.99

CONQUESTS OF

The year's only just begun and already it's a great one for PC adventurers. The superlative Monkey Island 2 (see page 62) is now setting the standards for others to follow - and not doing a bad job at all is the latest effort from Sierra, the firm that first pioneered the idea of making "graphic" the operative word in graphic adventures.

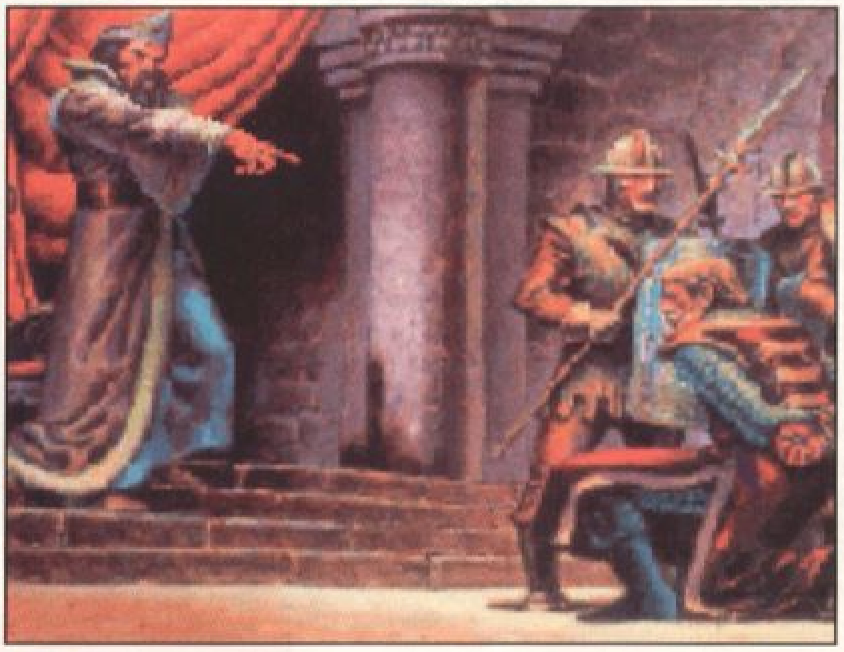
Conquests of the Longbow: The Legend of Robin Hood (deep breath) may be a little late to cash in on last Autumn's Costner-related hysteria, but it's nevertheless a more atmospheric telling of the classic tale than either of the recent Hollywood blockbusters - at least the hero in this one doesn't talk with a ridiculous American accent.

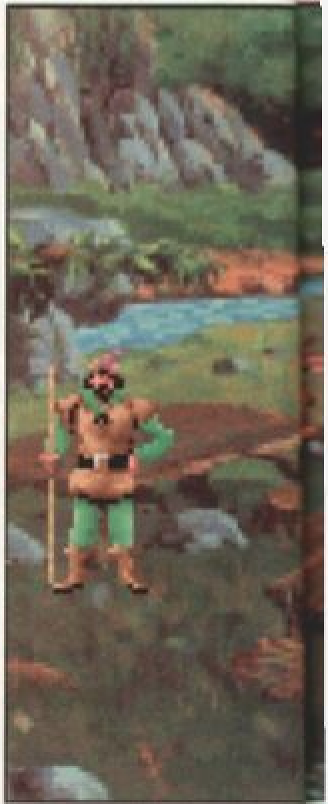
The plot is, of course, common knowledge - although Sierra's retelling adds a few wrinkles here and there for flavour and gameplay purposes. As King Richard the Lionheart returns from bitter defeat in the third Crusade, he is kidnapped by the dastardly King Leopold of Austria. Commanding an impossibly high ransom of 100,000 gold marks, Leopold has England in turmoil - with Richard absent, the country buckles under the tyranny of the Black Prince John. High taxes force the populous to resort to petty thievery, while the iron boot of the Sheriff of Nottingham's men deals out rough justice to to anybody who dares to steal bread for their family.

One band of particularly merry men, however, won't take any more. The fearless Robin Hood, along with his compatriots Will Scarlet, Little John, Much the Miller's Son, Alan A'Dale and Friar Tuck has sworn to bring king Richard back to the throne where he belongs - and do a little to redress the balance in the peasants' favour in the meantime.

As Robin, the player has a seemingly straightforward quest - raise the ransom that will return King Richard to his native land. But given the giddyingly-high asking price, no amount of small-time looting and hold-ups will do the job. The trick is to find a way to take the money in one fell swoop - and the first few days of exploration and interaction with the supporting cast soon reveal a way that might be achieved. The Black Prince is in cahoots with a whole ring of unseemly characters, many of whom occupy high office and would like nothing better than to see Richard never return. By infiltrating the conspiracy in a variety of guises, Robin can piece together the parts of the increasingly-tortuous puzzle and hopefully use the foul Prince's own money to buy back the King and overthrow him.

Rather than being one long sequence, Conquests of the Longbow is broken down into a series of daily episodes - even legendary outlaws need to sleep, after all. Each day begins and ends at Robin's secret hideout deep in the heart of Sherwood Forest. After an initial chat with his merry cohorts, the band splits up and goes about their business - the merry men only congregate very rarely outside of the camp, but Robin can choose to follow a particular member on his trav-





(Left) An animated intro sequence, told by a lute-strumming Bard sets the scene prior to play, telling of King Richard's abduction in glorious rhyming verse.

(Right and Above) Robin starts each day in his secret cave, deep in the heart of Sherwood. After a quick stretch and a yawn, he ventures out into the open to have a chat with his merry men (there's usually some worthwhile news from one of them) before they split up and go their separate ways for the day.

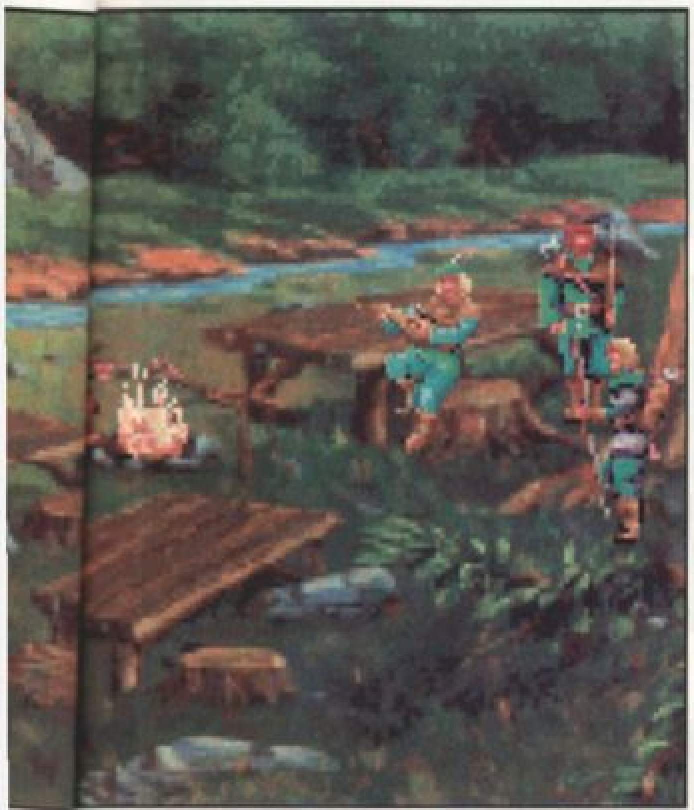
perla-
o fol-
first
ures.

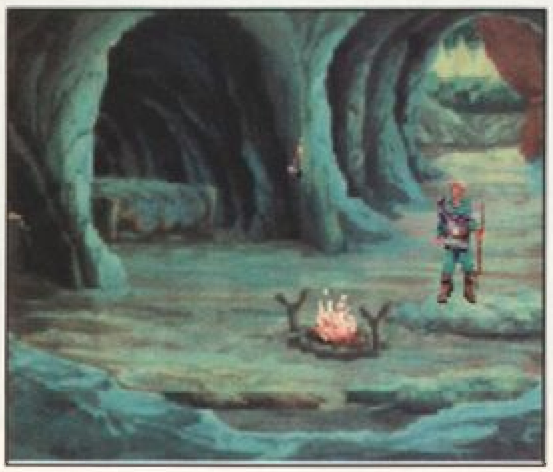
F THE LONGBOW

The Legend of Robin Hood

els, and will often meet up with them in little conversational set-pieces that move the story along. Apart from these incidents, however, Robin is very much a solo operator.

As with most adventures, much of the initial play time is spent exploring the game world and meeting characters - even here, though, things are considerably more tricky than usual. In this particular version of the tale, Robin's face is well-known, which means he can't move around in public without some sort of disguise. Walking around with a longbow and a quiver full of arrows as he does in his default get-up is a dead giveaway anyway. Early encounters soon provide a way round the problem - freeing a peasant prisoner from the clutches of a brutish guard on the forest road earns you his eternal gratitude, and the favour is returned by swapping clothes. Once dressed up in the peasant's shawl, Robin can move around at will - but without the advantage of his protective longbow. Apart from establishing good relationships with the people he saves, these isolated encounters with Sheriff's men and other baddies such as the Black Monks does wonders for Robin's score, enhancing his image as the protector of the weak.



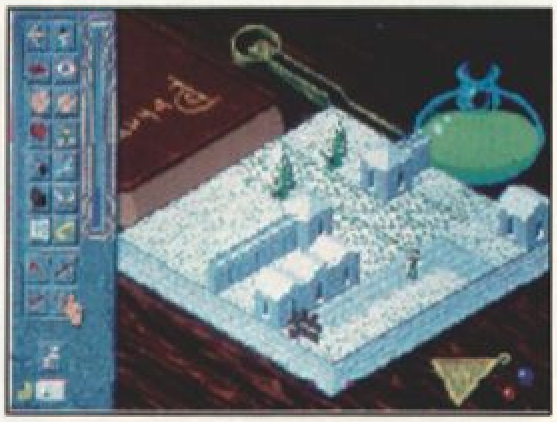


At first glance, Conquests of the Longbow doesn't seem like a particularly huge or sprawling affair. The game world works on two levels - there's Sherwood Forest itself, which is suitably huge but features only about half a dozen locations of particular interest (the rest is just blank woodland), and within that the town of Nottingham, which comes with its own separate map. They're essentially two completely different game areas, and the story has the player flitting between both on a regular basis to ensure that the scenery doesn't get boring.

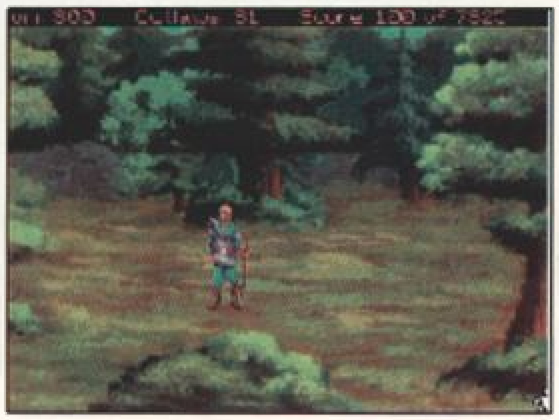
Sierra's Robin Hood may be a little late to cash in on last August's Costner-related hysteria, but it's nevertheless a more atmospheric telling of the classic tale than either of the recent Hollywood blockbusters.

Something that's particularly nice about the game is the fact that it's very strong on character interaction. The computer-controlled supporting cast is a comprehensive and varied one, and it's almost impossible to go for long without meeting somebody of interest. More often than not, it's these characters that move the

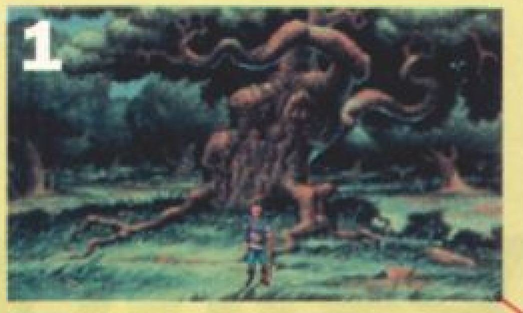
▶48



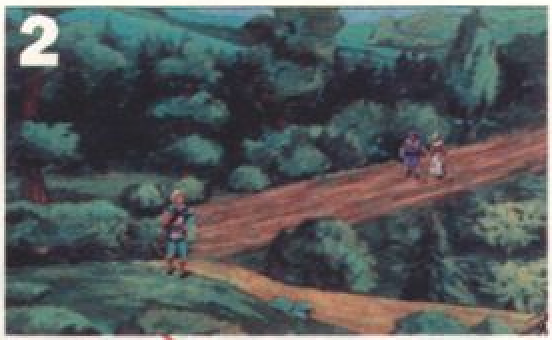
Uncanny! Not only do we get two conflicting Robin Hood films, but the same happens on the game front too! It was only a few months ago that we reviewed Millennium's isometric interpretation. Though The Adventures of Robin Hood is a class arcade adventure, it doesn't do much for anybody looking for a good Robin game - the characters are too small and comical to really identify with, and the game's simplistic nature means there's little in the way of real atmosphere. Longbow, on the other hand, is as authentic and atmospheric as anyone could want, and so it's a much better bet for the serious Robin afficionado.



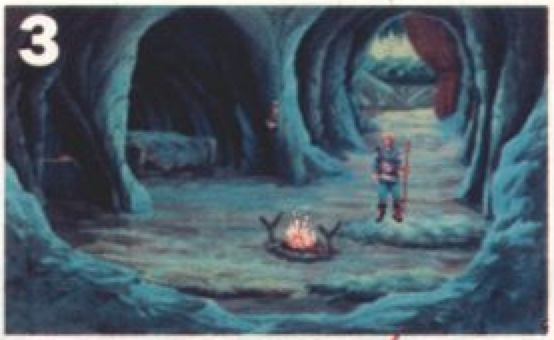
1



2



3



The main map of Nottinghamshire shows every location Robin can visit - although some secret ones are revealed only after the player has found it for himself. Here's a rundown:

1: The Great Oak is in fact a magical half-man, half-tree being. If Robin can solve his tortuous riddles, the leafy wizard may grant him magical powers...

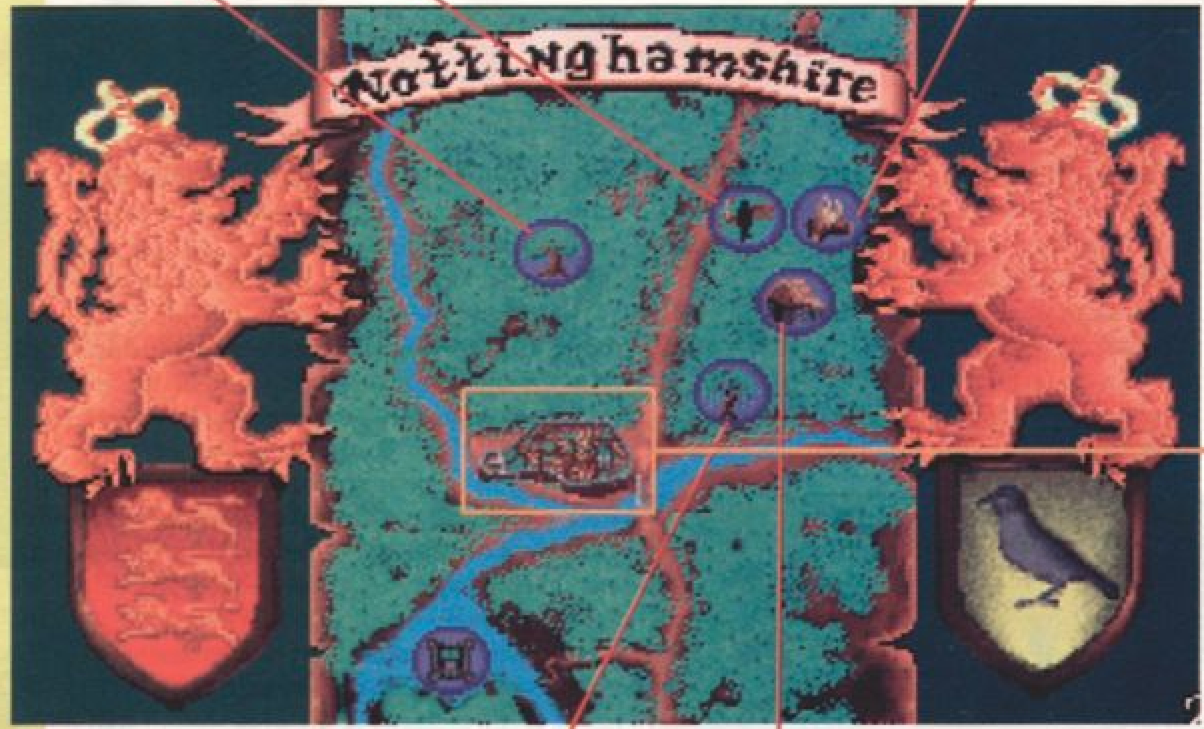
2: From this high vantage point, Robin can spy on any incidents taking place on the Watling Road below, and intervene should he so choose.

3: Don't forget to pick up your horn (ho ho) before leaving the cave - when blown it instantly summons the merry men.

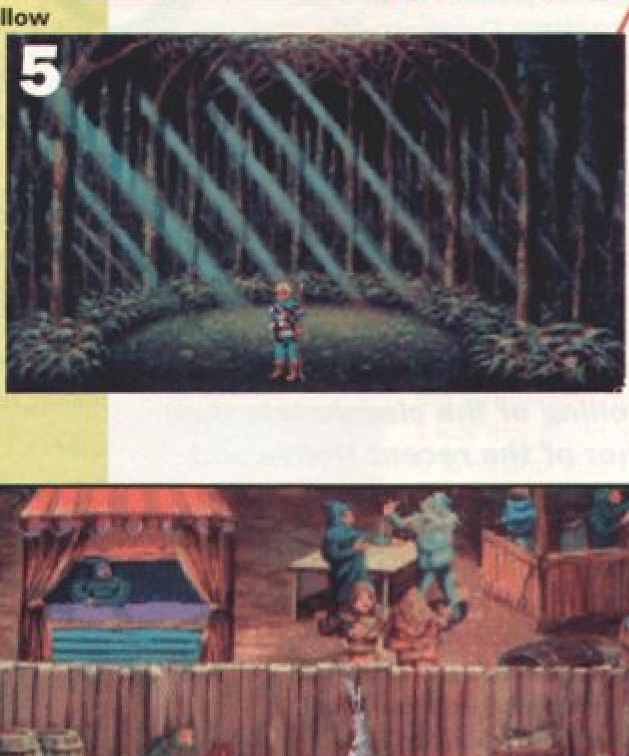
4: The Widow's Cottage. The old crone herself may be weak, but her three strapping sons would be an invaluable addition to youroutlaw band...

5: Robin's secret meetings with Marian always take place in this iddylic willow glade.

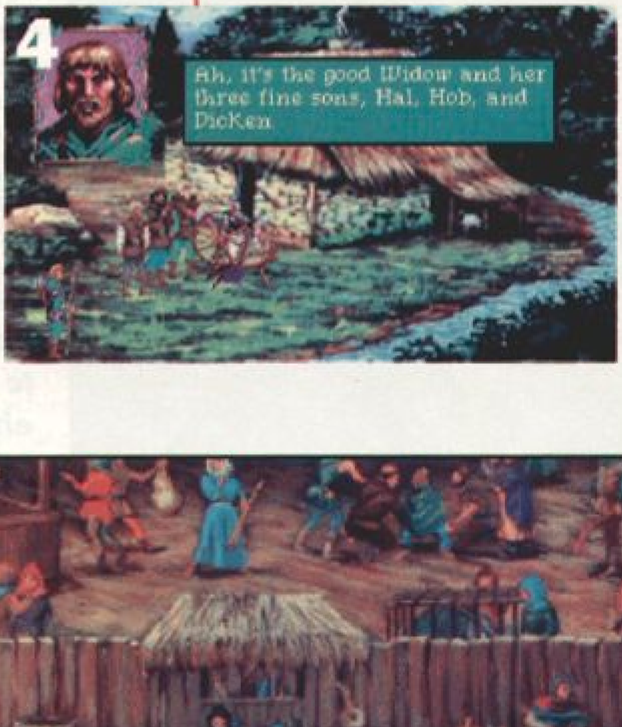
(Bottom Strip) Aah, the pomp and circumstance of Nottingham Fair. Quite apart from having to meet an important contact here, travelling to the fair gives Robin an opportunity to take part in the archery tournament and compete for the invaluable golden arrow - if won, it will pay for a hefty portion of King Richard's ransom. You can't just turn up, though - first you need a disguise, and getting a suitable one isn't as easy as it sounds.



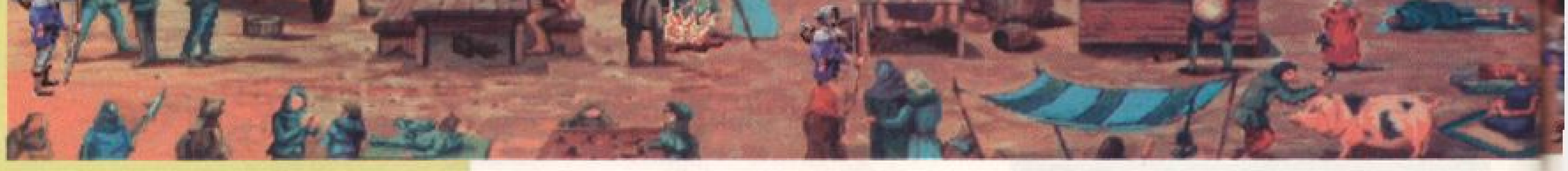
5

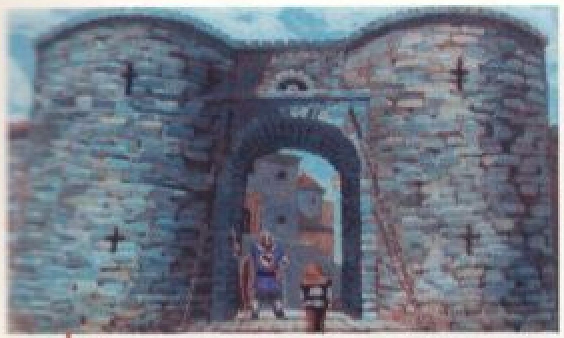


4



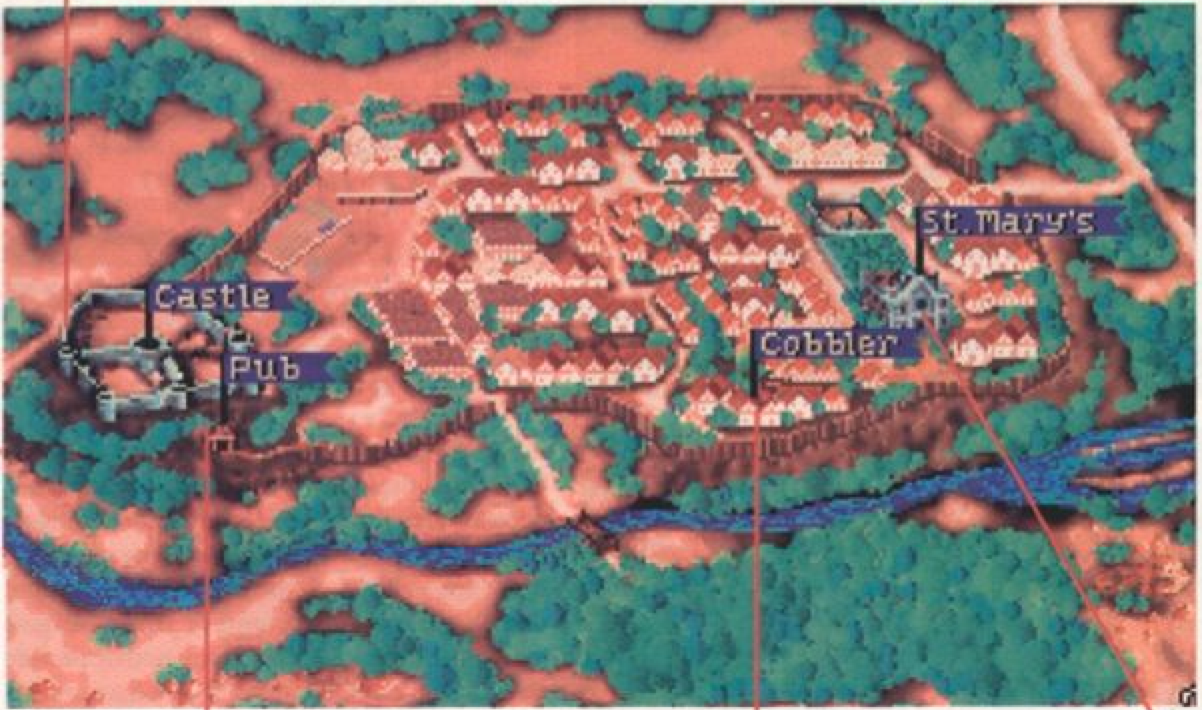
Ah, it's the good Widow and her three fine sons, Hal, Hob, and Dicken.



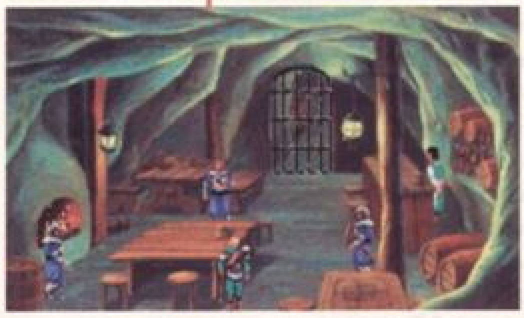


The castle of the Sherrif himself. Not even a brilliant disguise will get you past the no-nonsense guard on the gate - only much later in the game does the opportunity come to get

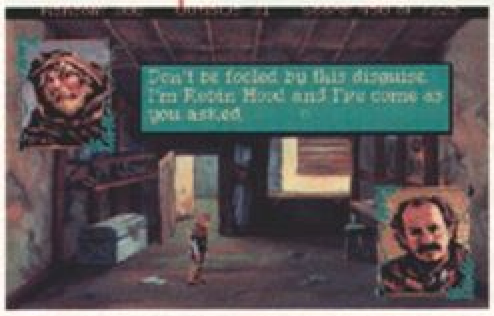
The Robin Hood world is a big'un, but the player needn't get lost in the dank recesses of Sherwood Forest - two handy maps allow him to travel instantly to the destination of his choice simply by clicking on the relevant icon. The system is intelligent, however, and won't let Robin travel to certain locations if he isn't suitably disguised for the occasion. Stealth is of the essence...



(Left) Under the despotic Sherrif's control, the once-peaceful town of Nottingham has been reduced to a seedy den of iniquity. Because of the guards constantly on patrol, Robin can only ever travel here in disguise, and even then must be careful where he treads and who he speaks to.

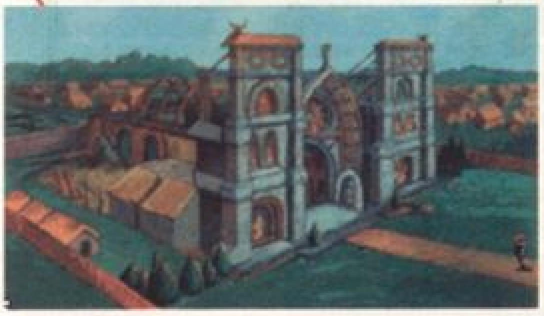


The local watering hole is always filled with the Sherrif's men (and sometimes the Sherrif himself), and so Robin must always be on his guard here, even when cunningly disguised. Note the barred gate at the back of the room - it comes in very handy...

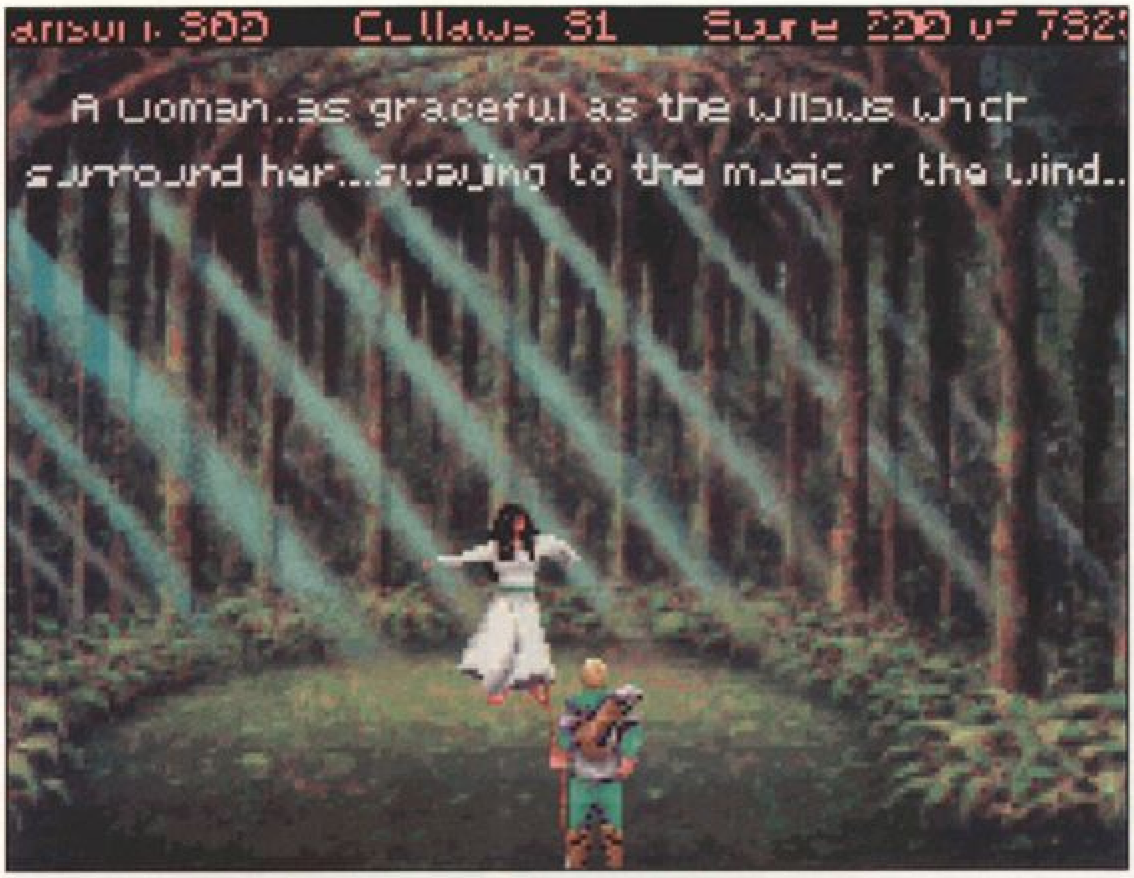


Don't be fooled by this disguise. I'm Robin Hood and I've come as you asked.

The cobbler is one of Robin's only allies in the town - but even he won't help you unless you can provide proof that you are who you say you are and not an impostor. Only a very special gift from Marian herself will convince him...



Saint Mary's Monastery may seem innocuous enough from the outside, but inside it's a boiling-pot of treachery and high-level corruption. There's invaluable information to be learned here, if only Robin can work out how to extract it from the suspicious monks...



A woman...as graceful as the willows which surround her...swaying to the music of the wind..

PC version

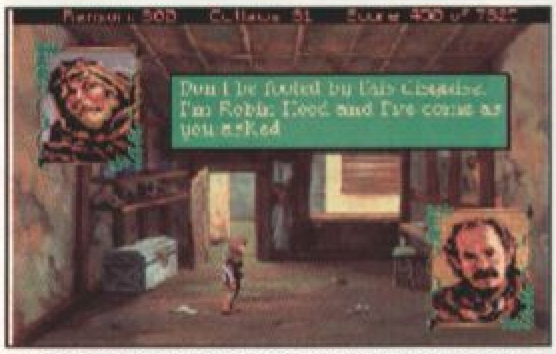
The same hand-painted graphic style seen in Monkey Island 2 has been put to good effect here, with suitably rustic and authentic-looking scenery all round. The soundtrack does an super job of setting the mood and deserves special praise, with a wide range of music ranging from the lively tunes of Nottingham Fair to the melancholic strains of the Marian love scenes. Lovely.

Amiga version

Commodore adventurers should start stringing their bows in preparation for Robin Hood's release in April. Suffice to say there'll be loads of disks, will have graphics slightly less refined and colourful, and will probably be 1Mb only as well. Got all that?

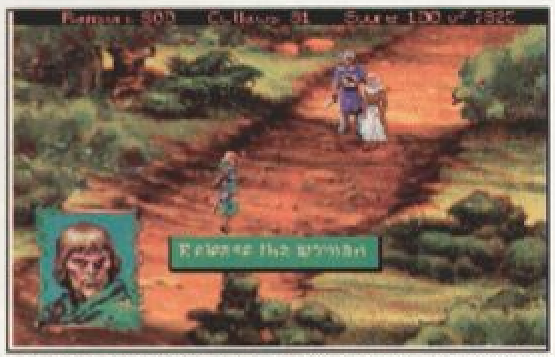
ST version

Sorry, but Sierra's not doing ST versions of its adventures any more. And that, naturally, includes this one. Oh well.



Don't be fooled by this disguise. I'm Robin Hood and I've come as you asked

As Robin works to retrieve the King's ransom money, he must adopt a variety of unlikely deisguises and make contact with some equally unlikely brothers-in-arms - this humble cobbler, for instance, is in fact a top intelligence man with vital info for Robin.



Release the woman

Robin gets plenty of chances to do good deeds on the Watling Road, which runs through the middle of Sherwood. Here for example, he attempts to free a peasant woman from the clutches of a brutish guard. Some folk, once helped, may well feel inclined to reward Robin in return...

45▶ story along - be they good guys or bad, they almost always have something useful to say, and the astute player will be making notes of their dialogue to pick up the hidden clues.

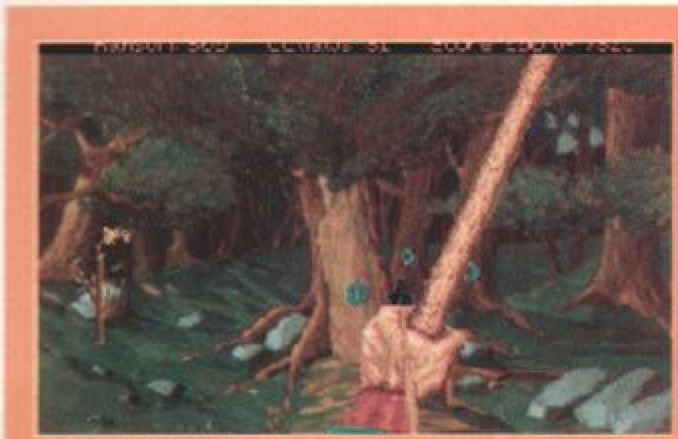
Unfortunately, Longbow lacks the sophistication of Lucasfilm when it comes to talking with characters - once a conversation is initiated, there's nothing the player can do to steer it in any particular direction by selecting different responses. It's just a case of watching what the two characters have to say to each other. Considering that the player is supposed to be Robin and have complete control over his actions, it seems strange that he should be no more of an observer when it comes to conversation. In something like Monkey Island, the ability to make the character say what you want him to not only allows the player to go off on different tangents, but it also helps to enhance the feeling of "being" the on-screen character. A similar system here might have done a lot to engage the player further.

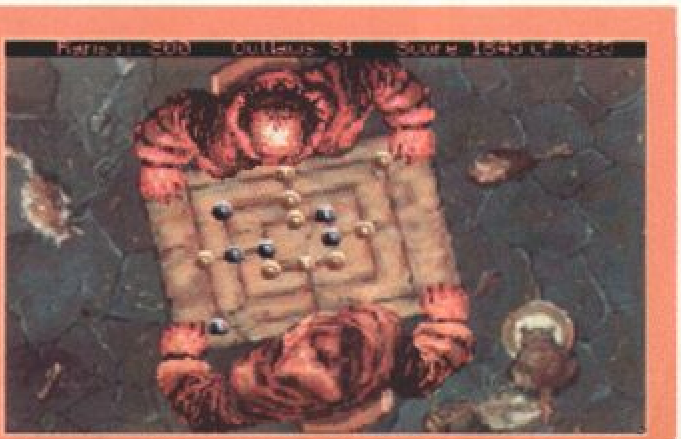
The only thing I'm a bit unsure of is the representation of Robin himself - with his craggy features and blond beard he hardly looks able to make it up the stairs, let alone swing from a balcony, split an arrow in half and carve up a dozen Sheriff's goons before lunch.

Character encounters aren't always restricted to passing the time of day, however. As is fast becoming the trend, Longbow provides frequent detours from the central quest by means of mini arcade and puzzle games that slot neatly into the story. At one point, for example, Robin must infiltrate the monastery of the evil Fen Monks, and to do that he must beat one of their number in a quarterstaff battle to obtain his habit as a disguise. Later on, in order to win favour in a particularly unfriendly pub, Robin must beat a computer opponent at the medieval board game Nine Men's Morris. There's also some longbow marksmanship to be done, played out in first-person perspective - a shooting range near to the merry men's hideout provide an opportunity to practice. It's difficult to judge how well these little sub-games really work, whether they add to the overall experience or detract from it, as it depends entirely on the player. Hard-core adventurers will just want to get on with the quest and won't appreciate such distractions. My guess is, though, that the vast majority of people will give these interludes a big thumbs-up as they provide a refreshing change of pace. Sierra have at least had the courtesy to include a variable difficulty setting for these sequences - at the lowest setting Robin wins each encounter instantly so even the most hopeless of mouse-jigglers needn't worry.

Sierra has gone all out to capture the adventurous spirit of the Robin Hood legend. You can - of course - rob from the rich and give to the poor, shoot the sheriff's men, save innocent peasants from the hangman's rope and generally be a dashing hero. Actually, progress through the game will reveal that while these "sideline" activities are relevant to the overall story, and not just a points-boosting exercise. They're also vital atmospheric elements that help sustain the dashing and dangerous Robin Hood idea throughout the game - if all the character did was trot about and solve puzzles, it might have been a fine adventure, but it certainly wouldn't have been Robin Hood.

Talking about puzzles, Longbow's documentation boasts "more puzzles than any previous Sierra adventure game." From my own experience of the game (about a third of the way through so far), that certainly seems to hold true. It's difficult to go far without something getting in the player's way - but the game's friendly structure means that the player is never really seriously stuck, as has been the case with some of Sierra's previous outings. With Longbow the player always has a fair idea of what he's supposed to be doing, if not exactly how to go about it. If anything, it seems a little easier than designer Christy Marx's previous





There's more to Conquests of the Longbow than just solving puzzles. At regualr intervals, Robin may be called upon to untilise his arcade skills in order to get out of a tricky situation or progress past a certain obstacle. The only way to relieve a Fen Monk of his robe, for example, is to beat him in a quarterstaff battle, complete with all the strikes, blocks and parries. And of course there's the legendary Archery tournament where Robin splits the arrow in half - or doesn't, depending on how well you line up the bow, allowing for distance and wind conditions. By far the most tortuous game of the lot, though, has to be the authentic recreation of the genuine medieval board game Nine Men's Morris, where the computer player is astoundingly clever. Fortunately all the games can be made as easy as you like with a simple slider control.

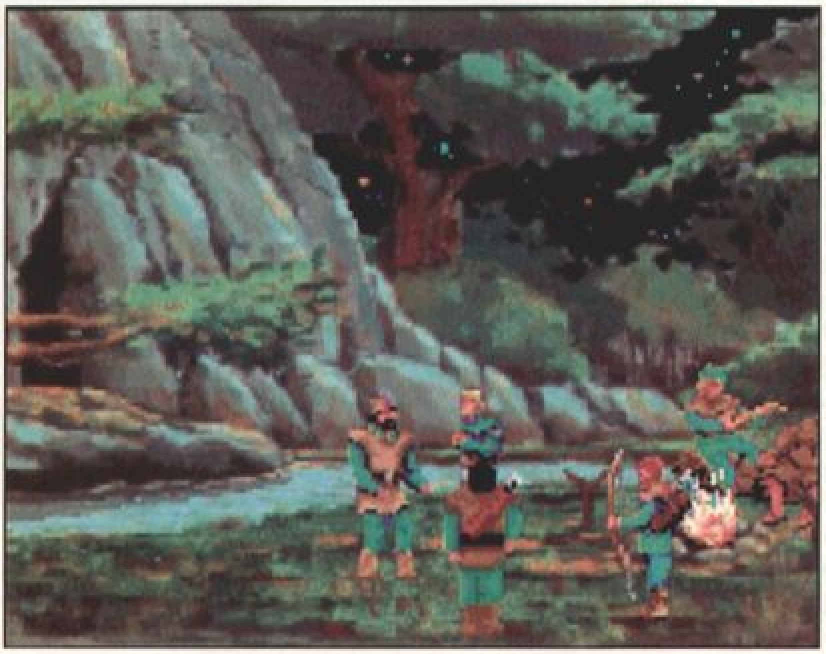
adventure, Conquests of Camelot. By opting to put more puzzles into the game rather than just making the existing ones tougher, Sierra's got the balance just about right. There's always something to mull over, but never anything really bad enough to have you searching for something to bash the computer with.

Sierra's adventures have always been regarded as a little stuffier than the likes of Lucasfilm or Delphine's - and rightly so, I suppose, considering they held on to their tortuous text input system for a little too long when everyone else was becoming user-friendly.

Robin Hood, which is entirely icon-controlled, is a good deal more accessible than anything the company's done before - if anything, its point-and-click system is even more instinctive than Lucasfilm's, as the player hardly ever has to access the icon bar. It's also a much more thoughtfully put-together product, with an engaging storyline and a whole air about the game that's incredibly engaging. The spirit of the Robin Hood legend has been captured superbly, and there's a slightly darker side to the tale in evidence here - it's more akin to the Michael Praed TV show than either of last year's sugar-coated Hollywood interpretations. There are so many little touches that add greatly to the overall effect and positively drown the player in atmosphere - I love it at the end of each day when the merry men meet back at camp under a moonlit sky to indulge in some humorous banter and discuss the day's events.

(Top left) You could hardly have a Robin Hood story without Maid Marian - and in Sierra's interpretation, she plays a vital part, not just as Robin's love interest but also as someone who lends a mystic element to the game. Far apart from the bimbo-ish image in previous incarnations, this Marian is a magical Forest princess, who grants Robin special magical powers as well as playing an important role in raising the King's ransom. And, of course, you get to snog her.

(Below) It's been a tough day, and Robin meets his merry man back at camp for a mug of mead and a friendly chat while Alan A'Dale plays soothing tunes on his lute. Then it's off to sleep (perchance to dream) before starting afresh tomorrow.



Robin Hood also works well as a period piece - the graphics are suitably dank and muddy, and the dialogue is spot on, with melodramatic medieval utterances flying all over the place.

It may be construed by some as a bit too serious for their taste - some less cultured members of the ACE team think that the game is too melodramatic, over-written and "twee" - but then they liked Hatris, so what do they know? The only thing I'm a bit unsure of is the representation of Robin himself - with his craggy features and blond beard he hardly looks able to make it up the stairs unaided, let alone swing from a balcony, split an arrow and carve up a dozen Sherrif's goons before lunch.

But I think it's great. At the end of the day I'd have to say that Monkey Island 2 is a better game when viewed purely as an adventure, but Conquests of the Longbow is nevertheless one of the very best I've come across, and it deserves special praise for recreating the legend in such an authentic and enthralling way. Make no mistake, this is a game with real heart, a genuine feel for the period and, most importantly, a true adventurous spirit. Superb stuff.

Go and buy it immediately.

● Gary Whitta

RATINGS

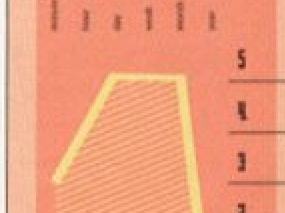
👍	👎
Stunningly atmospheric and authentic.	No radical gameplay enhancements.
Superb music.	Occasionally dodgy puzzles.
Well-structured storyline, good characterisation.	Questionable animation.
Insticitive control system.	

895 RATING

G	IQ	A	IF
8	7	9	9

Robin Hood's easy-going style and helpful narrative ensure that even the greenest of adventurers should have little trouble getting into the swing of things. Because it's broken down into days with congratulatory sequences at the end of each, the player can get a sense of achievement early on and at regular intervals throughout the game. It does a lot to keep the player involved. Admittedly there are a few dodgy puzzles along the way (some of the solutions aren't entirely sensible and are sometimes more down to luck and trial and error than logical reasoning), but for the most part the adventuring never really gets too frustrating. As to how long it'll last... I'd estimate quite a while. It may not be huge simply in terms of game area, but a tremendous amount of action has been packed into that space. With five possible endings and countless combinations of story twists, the game's unlikely to lose its appeal for some time. Unfortunately, the lack of any massive innovation in the game apart from in graphics and presentation means that it doesn't quite scrape a Trailblazer this time around. But it certainly shows enough progress and imagination on Sierra's part to foresee that Lucasfilm is going to be given a right royal run for its money in time to come.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



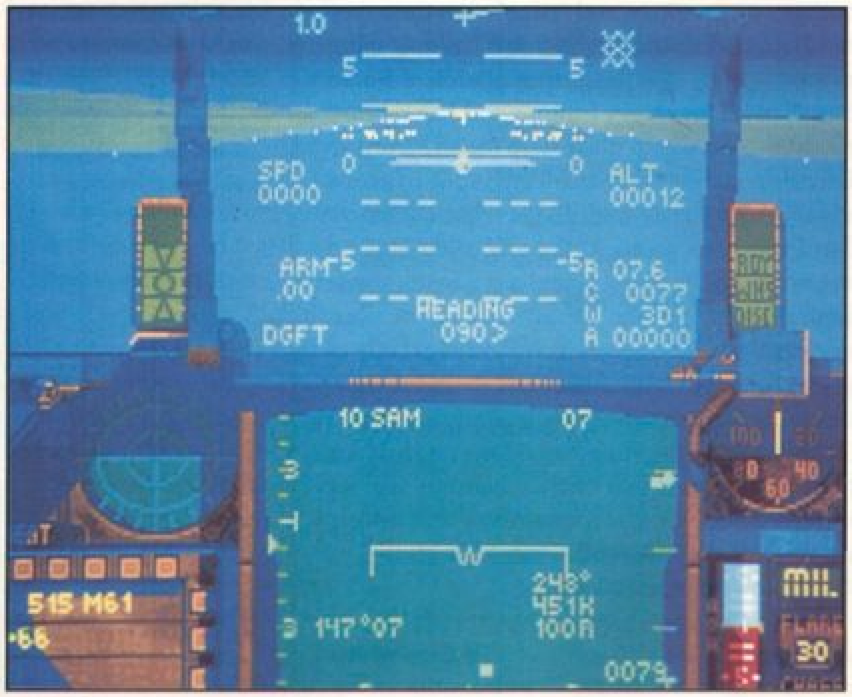
LONGBOW RATINGS

Genre Simulation
Publisher Mirrorsoft
Developer Spectrum Holobyte
Price £34.99

FALCON3

Describing Falcon 3.0 as a flight simulator is a bit like describing a television as a box with lights in. Everyone else makes brave claims about their flight games being the most accurate, realistic, impressive, awesome and excellent computer interpretations of aerial combat. But the people at Spectrum Holobyte don't bother. Instead they just quietly get on with the business of producing some of the world's finest simulation software.

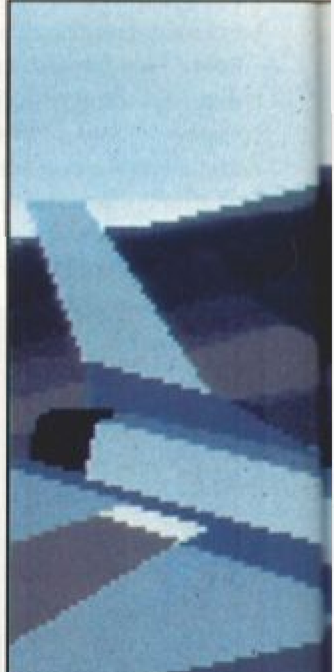
So fine, in fact, that until recent defence cuts forced a halt to the project, elements of their Electronic Battlefield System and Falcon code were actually being formed into a training programme for the US airforce.



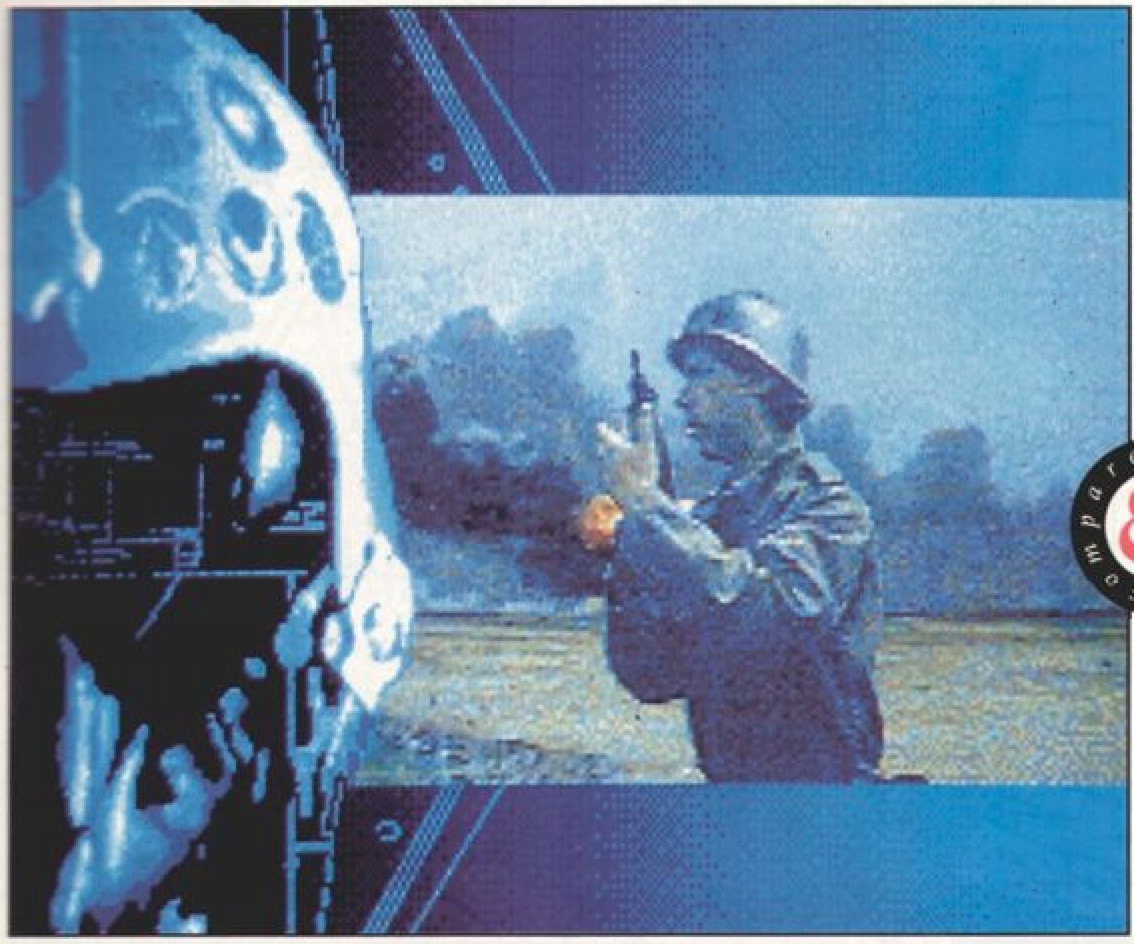
But accuracy alone is hardly the holy grail of computer software. You can study the aircraft, battle strategies and historical combat for as long as you like, and you may even be able to get all those elements into your simulation. But none of that counts for a thing unless you understand how to design a game.

And that's exactly what Spectrum Holobyte know what to do. Despite the Foreword's pleading tone that Falcon 3.0 shouldn't be treated as a video game, despite the noble but frankly ridiculous theorising about praying for a world when the children of the planet will be able to celebrate their differences instead of fearing them, and how we long for the day that war becomes a forgotten word, Falcon 3.0 is a superb game. A realistic, detailed and accurate game, but a game nonetheless. And you can't help feeling that some folks at Holobyte view this chest-pounding nonsense as a bit incongruous with the product as a whole.

Indeed, no sooner has the user choked back the tears and set aside the huge questions about the morality of war raised by this opening speech from Gilman Louie, Chairman of Sphere Inc., than he

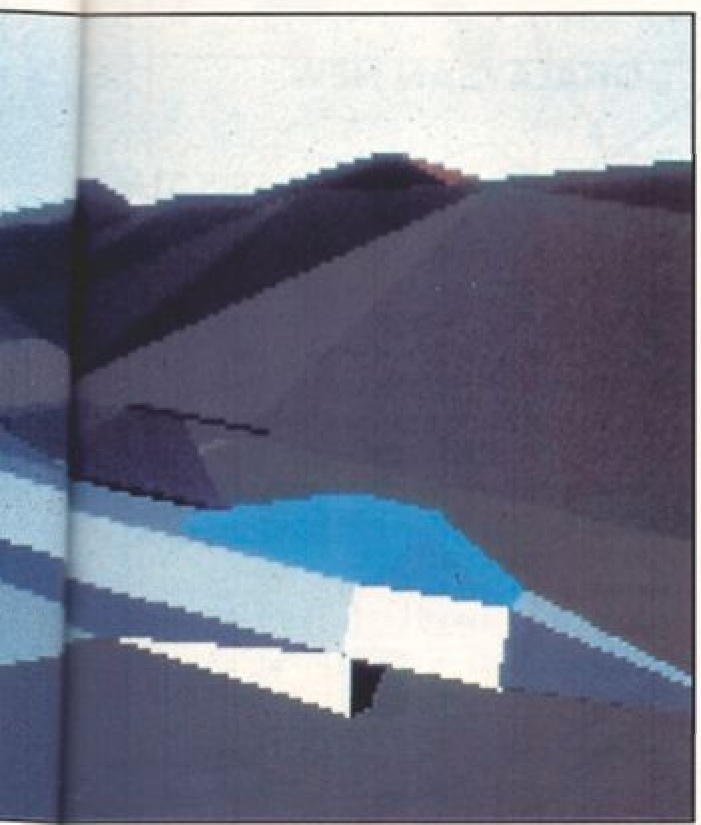


(Left) The bulk of Falcon action takes place in the cockpit as shown here. The view from inside the cockpit to either side proves invaluable when flying low.



is launched into the Introduction, a rousing Boy's Own tale of a bridge-bombing mission containing severely emotive language about enemy jets exploding like firecrackers and balls-out bravado.

Still, it's Holobyte's desire that their program be viewed as a simulation and celebration of the abilities of our armed forces, so let's at least take that on board.



(Above) Come outside! Yes, things look a lot more dramatic in an external view. The world can be seen from virtually any angle and at any zoom, which can help the player get a better impression of where he is in relation to the other aircraft than via radar alone.

Falcon 3.0, for the uninitiated, is the first game in Spectrum Holobyte's Electronic Battlefield Series (EBS). It's worth explaining the premise behind the series, since it will give some insight into the degree of forward planning and thought which has gone into the product.

EBS is a networking system specifically designed for playing other games in the series. Clear enough. So two players on separate PCs can take part in the same mission in real time. Not a ground-breaking situation, I'm sure you'll agree. But the trick is that future games in the series will allow two players to link up their machines while running different games in the series, so that one player can be using Falcon 3.0 to pilot an F-16 over the Panama canal while his friend, playing - let's say - Shahine 1.0 must position his missile launcher at a range suitable to destroy targets too hazardous for an air assault. Both players would show up in each other's games, and be able to communicate with each other too, requesting assistance and so on.

> ***Despite the Foreword's sombre tone, Falcon 3.0 is still a quite blisteringly exciting aerial combat simulator.***

Oh, yes, and the system will be able to handle up to sixteen individual users, each operating separately, and visible to the other fifteen. Impressed?

Great, so Falcon 3.0 is great if you've got a global link-up of mates who all want to play with their (as yet to be released) EBS games at the same time. So it's hardly going to be a barrel of laughs for the player who wishes to fly solo, right?

Wrong.

This is where the bit about designing a good game comes in. Without wishing to name any names, there are far too many programs around which, while boasting enough accuracy to make even the most anal of planespotters giddy with glee, do very little to make playing them anything other than a drudge. They're like an elitists club, all code-words for manoeuvres and assumptions that the player knows what he's doing because he's played a million flight sims before.

None of that here. Not only is the manual a dream to use (an absolute Godsend compared to the unfriendly bastards normally accompanying this sort of product) but the game is broken down into three constituent stages, each entirely sepa-

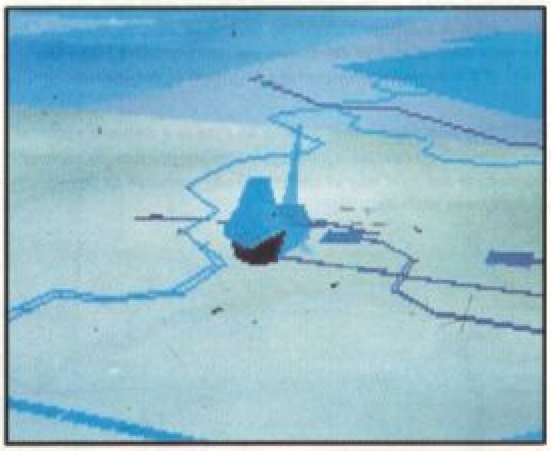
▶54

compare & contrast

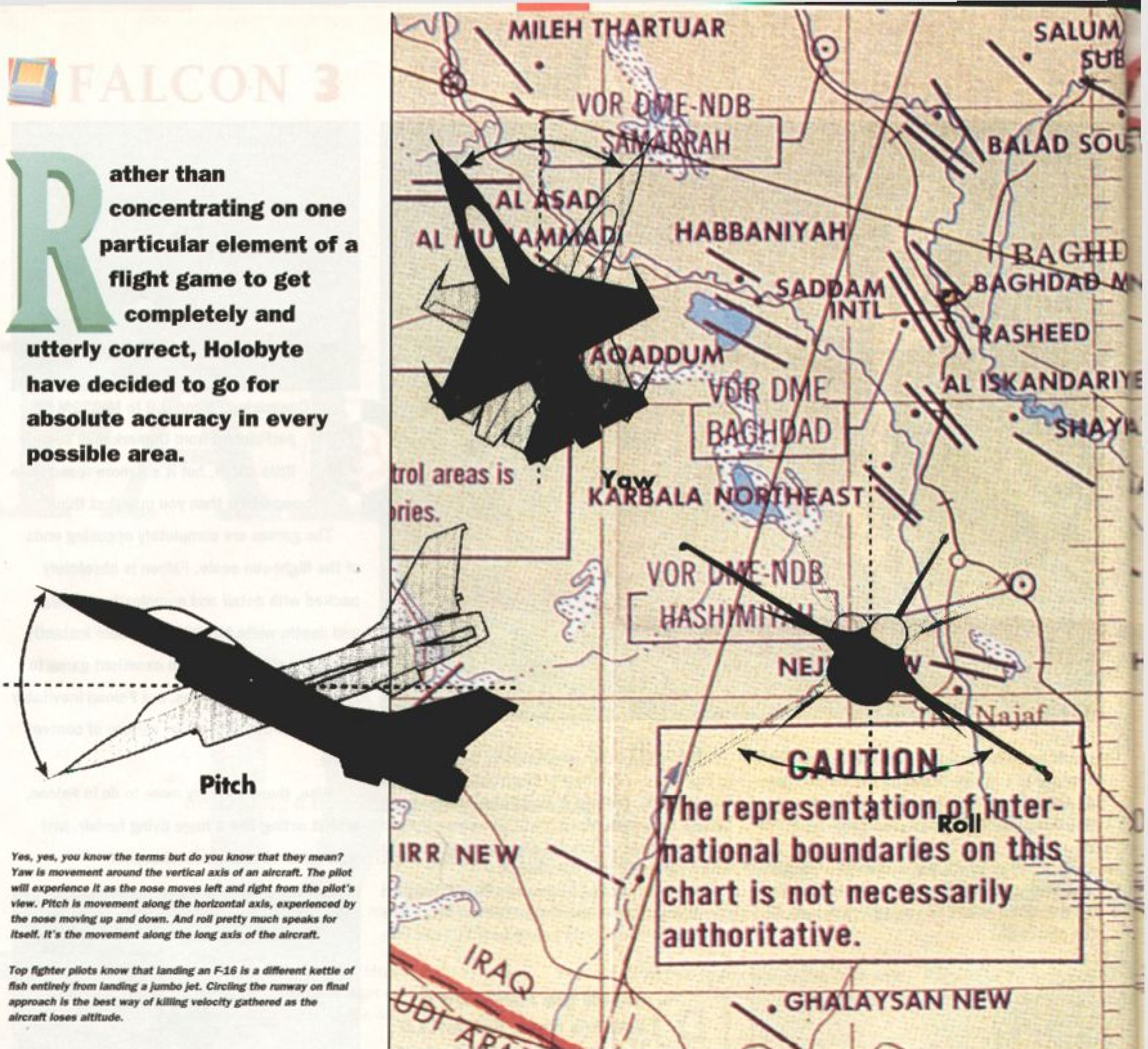
Comparing Falcon 3.0 to MiG29M SuperFulcrum from Domark may seem a little unfair, but it's a more reasonable comparison than you may first think.

The games are completely opposing ends of the flight-sim scale. Falcon is absolutely packed with detail and complexity, strategy and depth, while MiG29M is a more instantly gratifying affair. MiG is an excellent game to learn the flight-sim ropes, but Falcon inevitably wins hands-down for sheer volume of content alone.

Also, there's simply more to do in Falcon, with it acting like a huge flying funfair, just waiting to be explored. Whoopee!

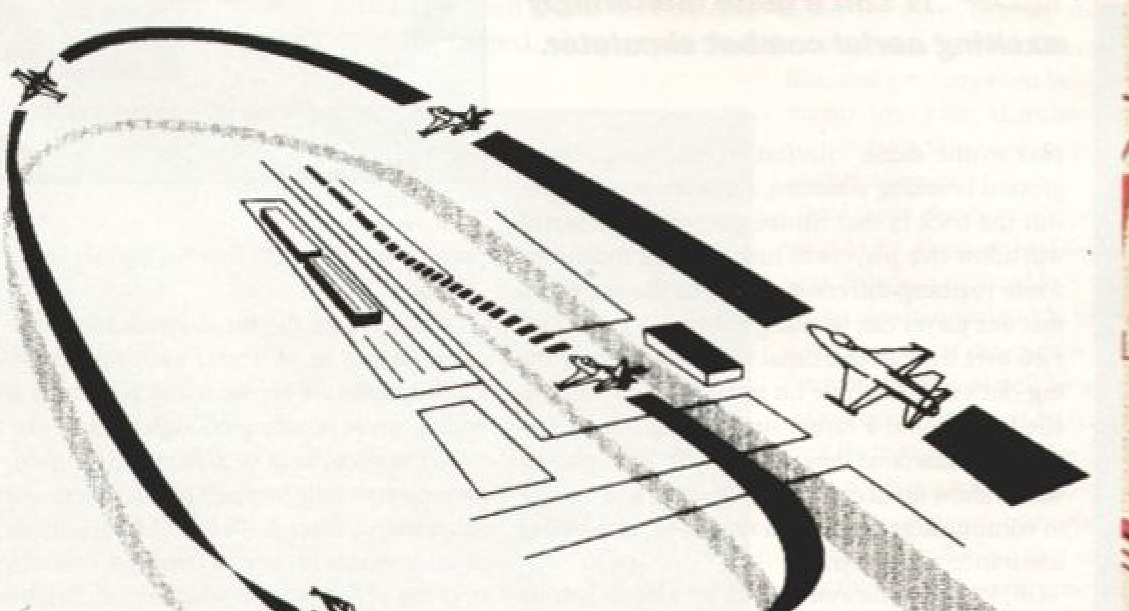


Rather than concentrating on one particular element of a flight game to get completely and utterly correct, Holobyte have decided to go for absolute accuracy in every possible area.


MILEH THARTUAR
VOR DME-NDB SAMARRAH
AL ASAD
AL MUHAMMADI
HABBANIYAH
SADDAM INTL
BAGHDAD
RASHEED
AL ISKANDARIYE
VOR DME BAGHDAD
BALAD SOU
SALUM
Yaw
KARBALA NORTHEAST
VOR DME-NDB HASHIMIYAH
NEJ
Najaf
trol areas is
ries.
Pitch
CAUTION
The representation of international boundaries on this chart is not necessarily authoritative.
Roll
IRR NEW
IRAQ
GHALAYSAN NEW
AS SALMA

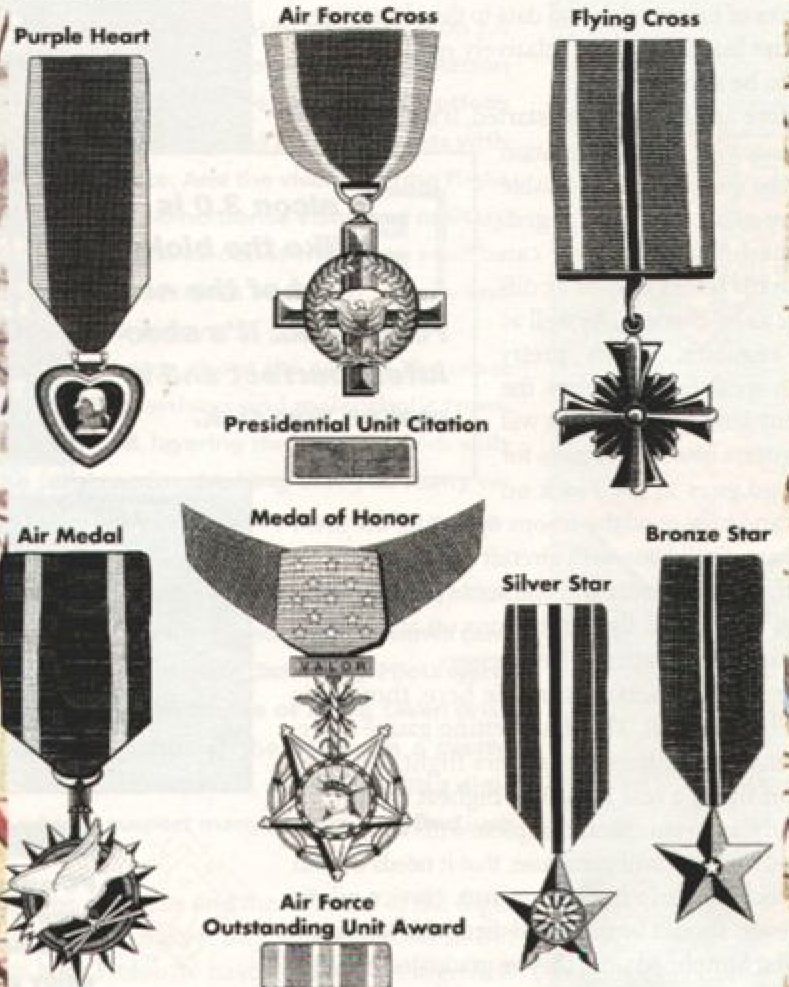
Yes, yes, you know the terms but do you know that they mean? Yaw is movement around the vertical axis of an aircraft. The pilot will experience it as the nose moves left and right from the pilot's view. Pitch is movement along the horizontal axis, experienced by the nose moving up and down. And roll pretty much speaks for itself. It's the movement along the long axis of the aircraft.

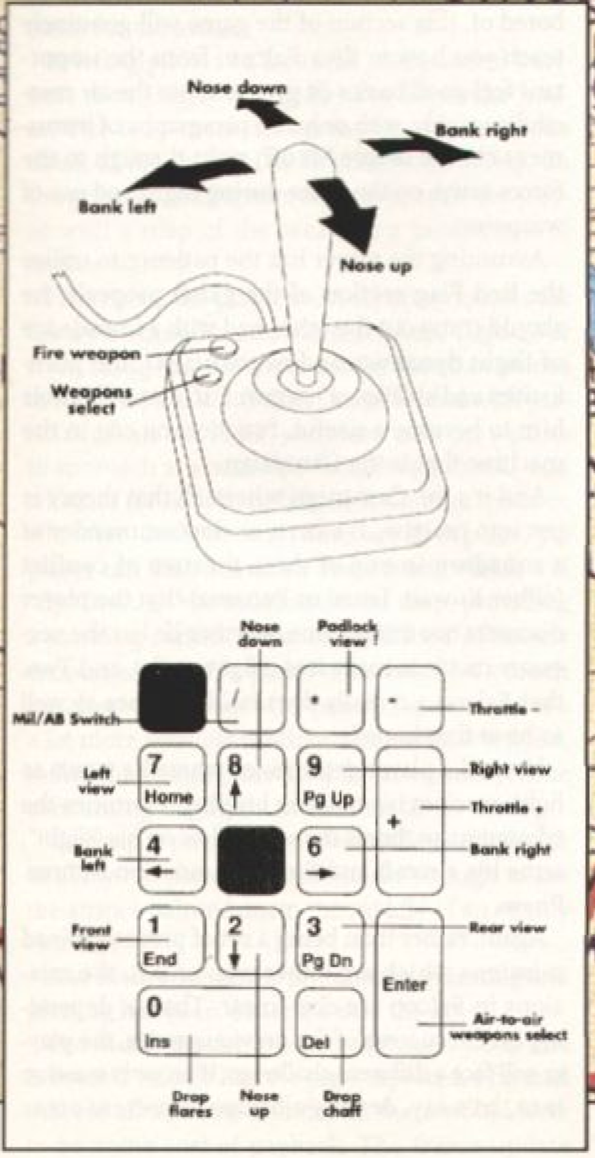
Top fighter pilots know that landing an F-16 is a different kettle of fish entirely from landing a jumbo jet. Circling the runway on final approach is the best way of killing velocity gathered as the aircraft loses altitude.


VORTAC-NDB RAFHA

SHAHABAD HIGHWAY STRIP
Arak
OIR14
KŪHHĀ
ILAM
9188
NDB MANDALY
OIR15
ABDAN
IRAN
IRAQ
SHAYZHAR
AYDAH BIN AL JARRAH
AN NUMANIYAH
DEZFUL HIGHW
HAWR HALFAYAH
KUT AL HAYY EAST
AMARA NEW
QALAT SIKAR
DME-NDB
Dijlah
OIR26
ABANDONED
pipe line

Throughout the game, heroic acts are rewarded with their appropriate medal. All displayed in glorious digitised animations.


Purple Heart
Air Force Cross
Flying Cross
Presidential Unit Citation
Air Medal
Medal of Honor
VALOR
Silver Star
Bronze Star
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

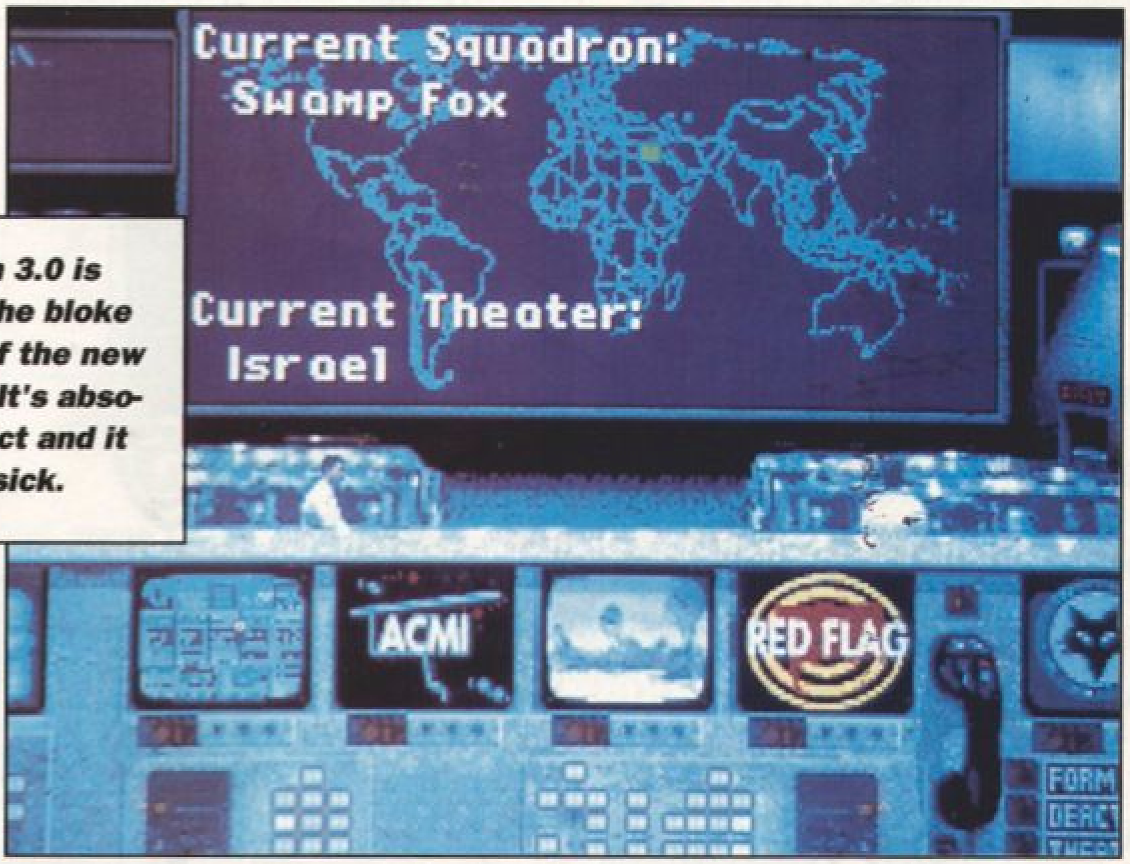

Nose down
Bank right
Bank left
Nose up
Fire weapon
Weapons select
Nose down
Padlock view !
Mil/AB Switch
Throttle -
Left view
Right view
Throttle +
Bank left
Bank right
Front view
Rear view
Air-to-air weapons select
Drop flares
Nose up
Drop chaff
/
*
-
7 Home
8
9 Pg Up
+
4
6
1 End
2
3 Pg Dn
Enter
0 Ins
Del

Even controlling a complicated beast like the F16 is handled with ease and aplomb thanks to some careful design. Witness this gorgeous and valuable sketch of a joystick.

Map Icons

- Generic Target
- Civilian Airport
- Military Airfield
- Military Airbase
- City
- Town
- Task Force
- Naval Base
- Radar Site
- Bridge
- Oil Field
- Industrial Target
- Army Base
- Railroad Yard
- Missile Site
- Nuclear Power Station
- Chemical Weapons Plant
- Biological Weapons Plant
- Infantry
- Mechanized Infantry
- SAM
- AAA
- Armor

Here are some icons out of the map. Blowing up less exciting targets such as railroad yards may well have a good effect on the was effors as a whole, since it will take the enemy longer to repair the lines, thus slowing down the progress of extra arms across the country.



51▶ rate from the others, yielding useful, bite-sized chunks of information and data to the player, keeping the learning curve relatively realistic. It's a feat to be admired.

Before any flight can be started, it's wise for the player to visit the configuration screen. Virtually every variable in the game can be changed. It's here that the player can make his life as easy or as difficult as he chooses. As well as the regulars, which pretty much speak for themselves, the Enemy intelligence ratings will determine how long it takes for the bad guys to get a lock on you, and how good the troops operating the SAM sites are. Collisions with aircraft can be turned on or off, as can redouts and blackouts (always a bind when learning to fly), limitations on armaments, and fuel and weapons effectiveness.

> **Falcon 3.0 is like the bloke out of the new Fosters ad. It's absolutely perfect and it makes you sick.**

The most important variable here, though, is the Flight Model. This four-setting gauge determines how accurate the players flight will be to that of flying a real F-16. The highest setting, Hi Fidelity, is so complex, complete with wing-bend and all other sorts of nonsense, that it needs a math co-processor chip in order to run. Novice pilots, however, should be quite satisfied with Moderate or even Simplified until they've graduated through a couple of missions.

From here, the player should explore both the Instant Action game and Red Flag. Far from preliminary sections, these elements would normally be marketed as games in their own right, each offering weeks of engrossing play.

The first, Instant Action, true to its name, simply puts the player into a block of hostile airspace, surrounded by enemy jets. He must survive for as long as possible and destroy all aggressors (everything). Since all elements of the simulator are active, this is an ideal situation to learn about the characteristics of the F-16's flight.

Next is the Red Flag training missions. Utterly and completely distinct from much of the Here's How To Fly nonsense that we're all so heartily bored of, this section of the game will genuinely teach you how to fly a Falcon, from the important feel-good basics (it gets you into the air mercifully quickly, with only two paragraphs of instrument checks before lift off) right through to the forces active on the plane during flight and use of weapons.

Assuming the player has the patience to utilise the Red Flag section of the game properly, he should come out the other end with a knowledge of flight dynamics and in particular, the peculiarities and abilities of his own F-16 that will enable him to become a useful, functioning cog in the machine that is the Campaign.

And it's the Campaign where all that theory is put into practise. It's here, as the commander of a squadron in one of three theatres of conflict (either Kuwait, Israel or Panama) that the player discovers two things. One, whether he has the necessary mettle to make it as a fighter pilot, and Two, that Falcon 3.0 really does hold together as well as he at first hoped.

Here, the player determines where he wants to fight, receives his mission briefing, examines the relevant maps, briefs the other pilots on his "flight", arms his aircraft and flies each mission in turn. Phew.

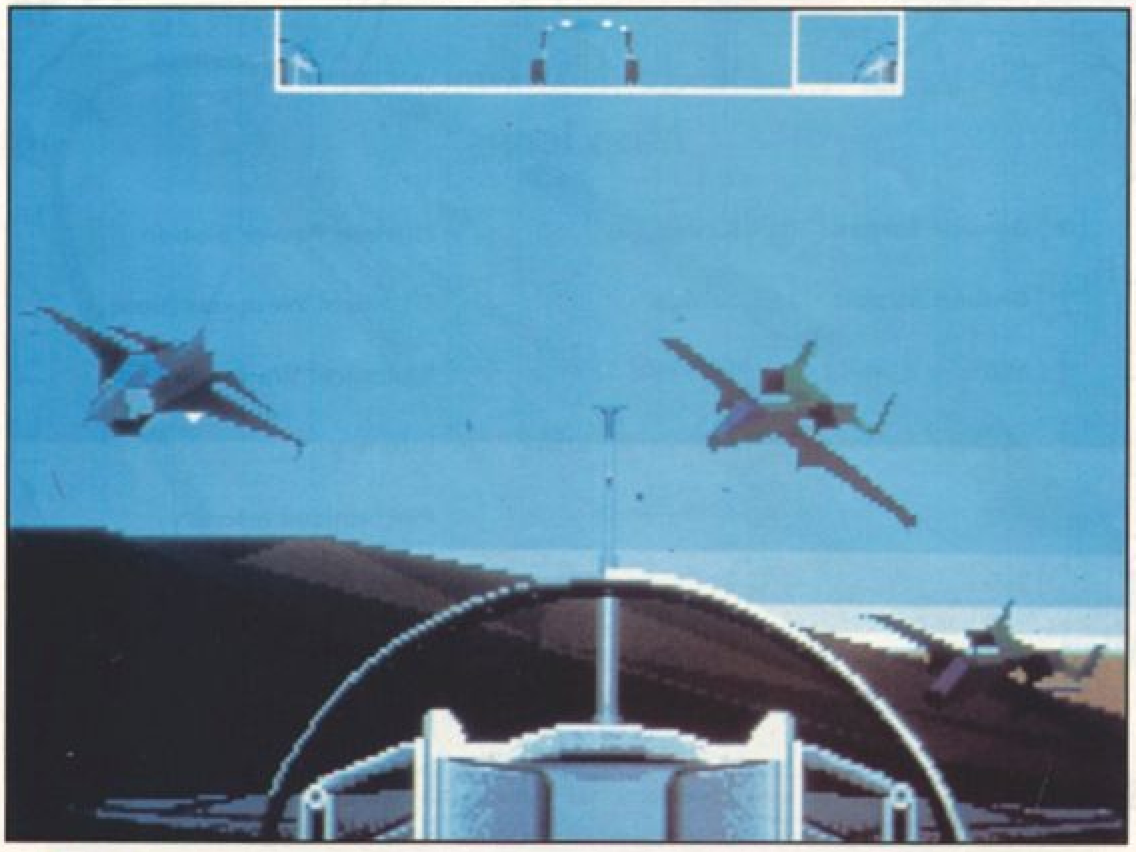
Again, rather than being a set of predetermined missions which are either won or not, the missions in Falcon are non-linear. That is, depending on the success of the previous sortie, the player will face a different challenge. If an early mission is to, let's say, destroy a bridge to prevent arms

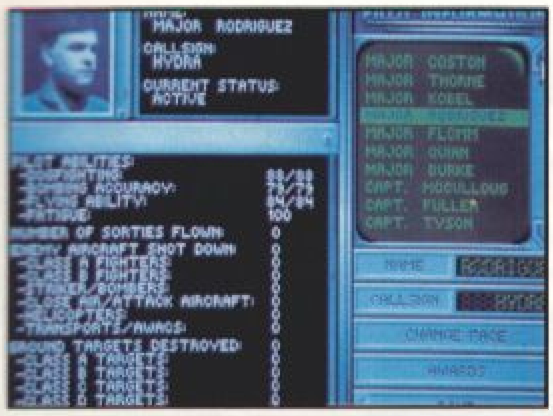
PC version

PC owners lucky enough to have a math co processor *and* a sound card will be able to enjoy all the benefits which Falcon 3.0 has to offer; excellent speed, a cracking soundtrack and lovely visuals. Not a bad package, eh?

Amiga version

News from the States suggests that Spectrum Holobyte are working on an Amiga version for release in Mid '92. We can hardly wait!





MAJOR RODRIGUEZ

CALLSIGN:
HYDRA

CURRENT STATUS:
ACTIVE

NUMBER OF SORTIES FLOWN: 0

ENEMY AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN:

GROUND TARGETS DESTROYED:

Top 10 High Scores

getting to a particular enemy destination, he may well find himself having to them perform a reconnaissance mission later on to discover if the enemy have made any contingency plans regarding the weapons. Such a mission may then logically lead to the flight being ordered to destroy a different route for the arms.

Briefing pilots is a far more complicated business than simply telling them to follow the leader. The Map room allows the most meticulous detail of the mission to be planned in safety, on the ground. Intelligence reports provide the player with a map of the area and a breakdown of enemy activity.

From here, the player must set up waypoints for his own autopilot and the rest of the flight. Far from being "dumb" locations for the other planes to travel to, the Waypoints can be loaded with particular features. A waypoint can instruct a plane to approach at a particular height and speed, and whether it needs to be bombed, photographed or whatever. Once the waypoints are all in place, the player can then activate a Trace mode which will "fly" through the mission on the map, providing a running commentary of likelihood of enemy encounters etc. If a player discovers he's a touch too close to an Iraqi MiG patrol, for example, it's a lot more sensible to slightly move his waypoint, rather than getting involved in unnecessary, time consuming dogfights in mission time.

The map is pretty impressive too, detailed enough to allow the player to zoom in far enough to see the stripes painted down the middle of an enemy runway.

And then, once all the preparation, planning and plotting has been done, it's into the air.

The most surprising aspect of Falcon 3.0 is that is doesn't handle like the pig I expected. I figured that for all its detail and depth, there would have to be some sort of payback. The frame update would be atrocious and the accuracy of the flight model would make it impossible to control. But even here Holobyte have got their act together.

I tested it on a pretty basic (16Mhz) PC, and it shifts like nobody's business. The action did slow down in the Hi Fidelity flight model, but other than that, it's perfect.

Bitmapped explosions are matted onto the requisite polygons in curiously fashionable style, adding a bit of flair to the impossibly calculated look of the flight sims inseparable graphic tool.

Further realism is added by the digitised speech (yes, it's got that too) of your wingman keeping up a constant barrage of messages of warning, congratulations or encouragement throughout the mission. And there's even a video-playback mode where pilots can inspect their missions, save them to disk, replay them at any angle with the drag factors and altitudes displayed, in wireframe or filled vectors.

Despite all the features, and the depth and the accuracy and this praise, Falcon 3.0 won't appeal to everybody. There will always be a core of gamesplayers, among them some PC owners, who will find products such as Falcon simply too scary to pick up off the shelf. But through the production of such excellent products as this, Spectrum Holobyte should reap the rewards which will come when these games are bought as readily as the Sonics and Godfathers in the UK.

To conclude, Falcon 3.0 is like the guy out of the Fosters advert; the brainy professor who looks great and drives the top car, dresses well, is loved by all the girls, and admired by all the guys AND has the nerve to drink the most fashionable beer on the planet. He's absolutely perfect, and it makes you sick. After this, there can be no more.

● **Jim Douglas.**

... But it's not all polygons! ...

(Top of page) The computer automatically keeps a log of every action made by every pilot in every flight of every campaign.

(Second top) The entrance to the Action Game; a fair indication of the rollicking nature of the play which is about to commence.

(Above top) The map screen, which can be zoomed into at any magnification the player desires. The tracking can be used to check for likely enemy activity which would hamper the mission.

(Above) The wire-frame video playback mode. Here the player can watch his mission back to check for successes and failures. Also, wind factors and the like can be examined.

Hey, Good Lookin'!

Even in it's most number-crunchingly complicated phases, Falcon 3.0 manages to look as pretty as a picture. Indeed, the presentation throughout the entire game is stunning. The menus and options screens, of which there are many, are presented as metal sheets with robust switches to ker-chunk into place. And the visuals during flight are, well, awesome. Combining the no-nonsense visuals of military hardware like the Head Up Display (the colour of which can even be changed, by the way) with excellent realism of terrain texture and the green-screen data readout bits, Falcon is a gem.

And the sound? Don't speak to me about the sound! The most dreamy, sweeping chords, rousing fanfares and melancholic trumpets issue from the PC's sound board, layering the game so thick with atmosphere that you'd be forgiven for thinking that you really really really were an F-16 pilot being decorated or prepared for yet another heroic mission.

The realism and flair of the presentation may be a touch too much for sensitive gamers, however, as there are a number of scenes contained which are so realistic that they're quite disturbing. Pilots ejecting over hostile territory stand a good chance of being taken prisoner and left to languish at the hands of the enemy in a pretty disturbing scene. But it's the funeral sequence, complete with a digitised star-spangled coffin which I suspect many players may find just a touch too much.

ACE TrailBlazer

ACE SOUND

RATINGS

FALCON 3

👍	👎
Great Graphics Great Sound Great Gameplay	None!

970 AMIGA RATING

G	IQ	A	IF
9	5	9	9

One of the few games that you really will continually return to. Packed more than a very packed thing with detail and facts and, most importantly, fun, Falcon 3.0 is destined to go down in the annals of computer games history as one of the very, very best. And it's inclusion in the Electronic Battlefield Series promises to boost the game's longevity every time Holobyte release another EBS title. Are they onto a winner or what?!

Genre Role-Playing Game
Publisher Accolade
Developer Horror Soft
Price £39.99 Out Now

ELVIRA 2

JAWS OF CERBERUS

It is said that the great thing about America, the golden land of opportunity, is that anyone - no matter what their class, colour or creed - can 'make it' and become somebody.

However, in the kooky world of American TV, it often seems that this has been perverted to mean that anyone, no matter how lacking in any obvious talent or ability, can become famous.

Take the phenomenon that is Elvira, for example.

Back in the early 80s an American TV station decided to screen a late-night season of low-quality 'cult' horror movies. To add a bit of spice to this standard schedule-filling ploy they created a vampish black-clad temptress to present each movie. This was Elvira, of course, who was played by the petite Cassandra Peterson.

Although short of stature, Elvira's bimbo-esque personality and ample bosom ensured her instant appeal to the mainly male, mainly pubescent, mainly rather sad bars-have-closed TV audience. Her popularity soared, rapidly outstripping that of the Z-grade movies she was supposed to be fronting. A media star was born.

But, hey! What else can you expect from a country that makes a household name out of gameshow hostess Vanna White or - Good Lord! - allows the cardigan-wearing, fake-tanned Casey Casum to front its top pop music show? We'll have the answers for you right after this break...

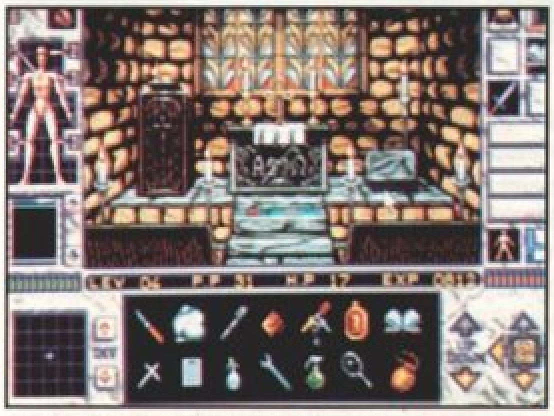
...See? It's infectious. That's why we over here in Britain shouldn't get too complacent, not when the likes of Cilla Black and - ugh! - Jeremy Beadle rake in millions of viewers a week. And... And... And...

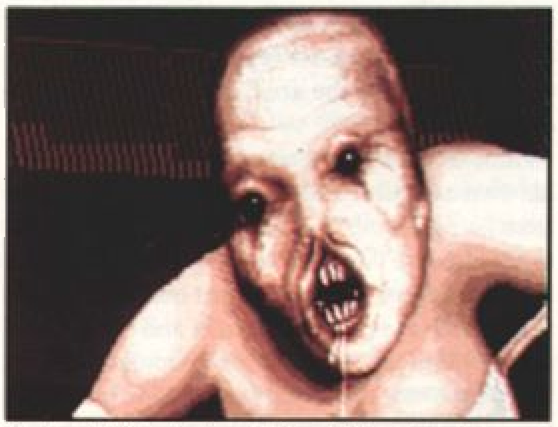
> **_ike the prequel, Elvira 2 is a Dungeon Master variant with a strong spicing of graphic horror as its major selling point._**

Okay, so I'm ranting a bit. And I'm being unduly harsh on Miss Peterson - to be fair to her she did invest Elvira with a certain amount of kooky charm and 'off-the-wall' humour. But - hopefully - you get the point. (Just don't ask me what it was, alright?)

The limits of such a media-made celebrity are always cruelly exposed when some bright spark in Hollywood decides that the celeb would make a great subject for a movie. This was the sad fate that befell poor Elvira, who had to suffer the indignity of appearing in *Elvira: Mistress of the Dark*, a low-quality camp comedy/horror affair. The humour was real barrel-bottom stuff, being fashioned from innuendo so blatant it wouldn't even make the grade in a *Carry On* movie.

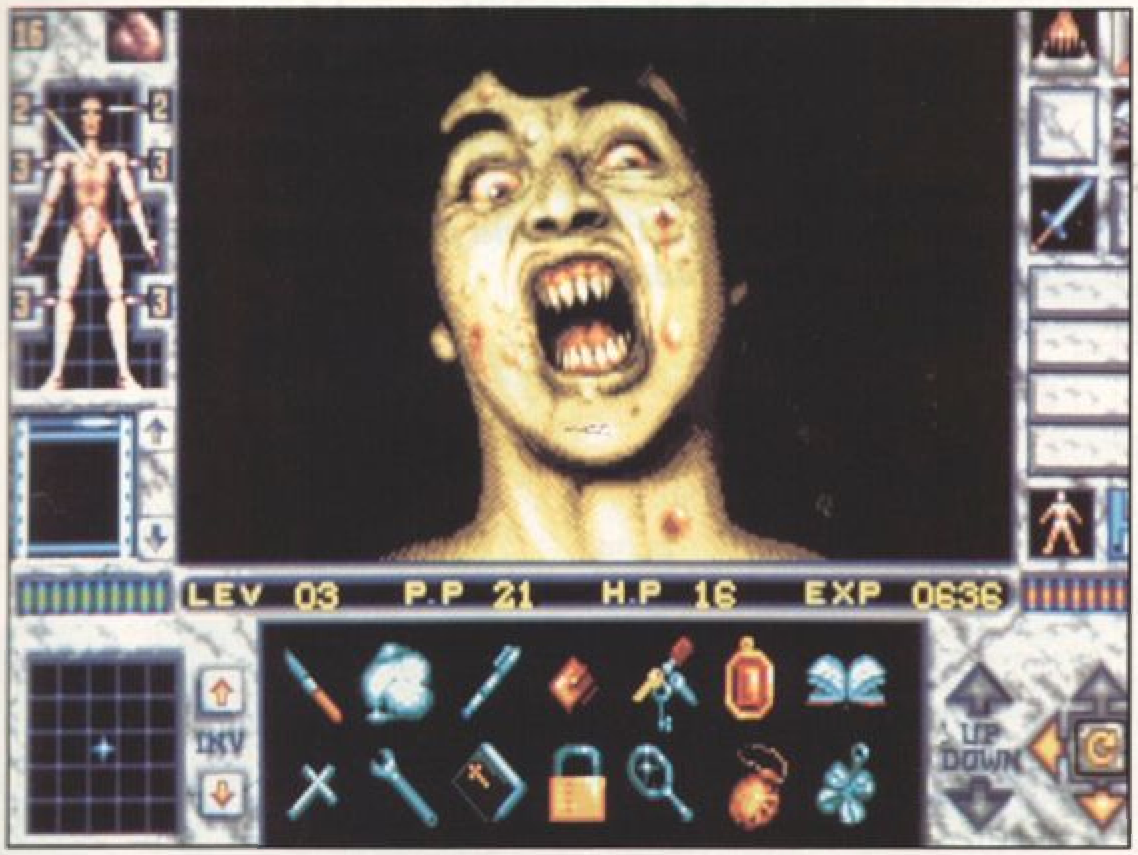
Not that this stopped Horror Soft signing up the licensing rights, with the identically titled game going on to achieve notably greater critical and commercial success than the movie. And now we have the game's sequel, Elvira 2: Jaws of Cerberus. Like the prequel, it's a *Dungeon Master* variant with a strong spicing of graphic horror as its major selling point. As far as I know, there's no forthcoming sequel to the movie. Phew. There is a God.

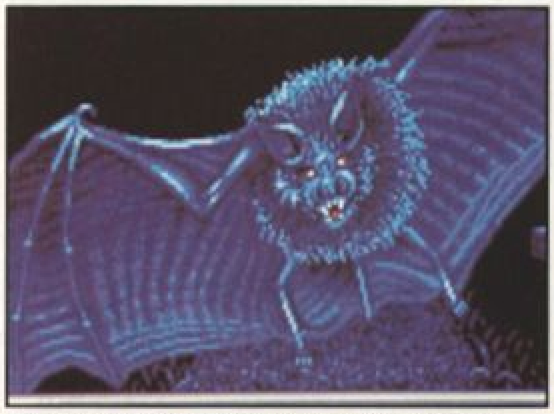




Oooh, nasty! When the player first meets this creature, it resembles a beautiful and very alluring young woman. Strangely drowsy, the player collapses onto a nearby bed. On awaking, the creature - still in female form - leans over. Hey! This isn't so bad! Then, a terrifying transformation takes place. Aaaaaalllllleeeeee!

So given that there's no movie to tie into, what's the next best thing you can do with an original game. Hey, why not set it in a movie studio!? The scenario describes how Elvira is hard at working filming her latest opus 'House of Horror' at Black Widow Studios. The player, as Elvira's boyfriend (ha! - you wish!), turns up at the studio to collect her one night but finds the place strangely quiet and deserted.





The player encounters all manner of beasties during Elvira 2, ranging from vampire bats (above) to flesh-eating zombies (left). The humanoid graphics are particularly impressive, seemingly being based on digitised pictures of real people with sores, boilds, fangs, etc, added with a paint package.

As the player approaches the locked studio gates a vision of Elvira (but she's a vision already, cry her fans) appears, explaining that an Evil Spirit in the form of a giant three-headed giant dog has kidnapped her and is planning to sacrifice her at midnight. (It's not made clear exactly why). The vision fading rapidly, she explains that the spirit is holding her captive in Studio...

Too late! Before Elvira can tell the player her exact location, the vision disappears, leaving only her spell book behind. Come on, big fella, don't hang around. There's a damsel in distress...

At the start of the game the player can opt to become either a stuntman, a private eye, a programmer or a knife thrower. Each is described by a eight statistics; weapon skill, strength, intelligence, and so forth. The game plays slightly differently depending on the character chosen; a stuntman may have a greater weapon skill rating, but a programmer has a higher intelligence. You get the idea.

The largest area of the screen is devoted to a graphical representation of the player's first-person 3D view of the game world called the 'action window'. By clicking on a four-pointed arrow the player can walk around the current location. Movement is in coarse chunks, so that one moment you're a good ten feet away from a wall, the next you're practically touching it.

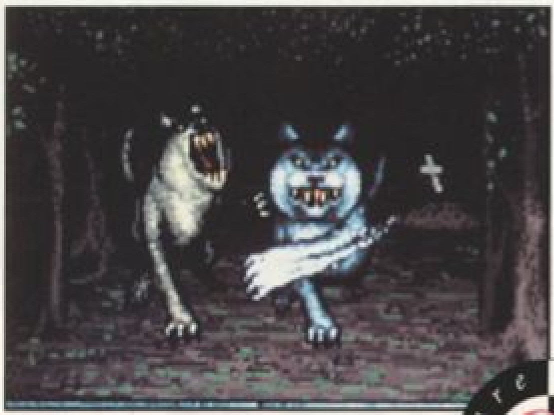
This is a pretty standard display format, made popular by games like *Dungeon Master* and *Eye of the Beholder*, but unfortunately Elvira's programmers bend the rules a little. At one point in the game, for example, the player finds himself in the studio car park. Directly in front of him is an empty parking bay, with Elvira's car parked in the slot next to it. However, turn to look at the car (from the side) and it's suddenly jumped to about fifteen feet away. Move forward to get a closer look and the player suddenly finds himself looking at the car's boot. Very disorientating and most jarring.

Also, although the car park obviously extends out further beyond the car, the player is not allowed to walk into that area and view the car from the other side. Okay, so there's no need for the player to, but surely the player should be allowed to find that out for himself? A similar situation occurs in some of the smaller rooms in the studio - you enter them and are presented with a view but you can't turn to examine the side walls or enter any further, all you can do is leave. Annoying.

This problem seems to arise from the restrictive graphics system used. In games like Eye of the Beholder the designers use a generic set of walls and floor, adding surface detail (torches, puddles, fonts) to distinguish these otherwise identical areas. However, in Elvira each location appears to have been individually drawn, making for lots of variety and detail but limiting the player's movement. After all, in a game of Elvira's size you can't ask a graphic artist to draw all four walls of EVERY room in the game. But however understandable and excusable, the restrictions are still annoying.

The player can interact with the game world in a manner of ways. By clicking on items in the action window the player can make a cursory examination of objects. However, this is a

▶60

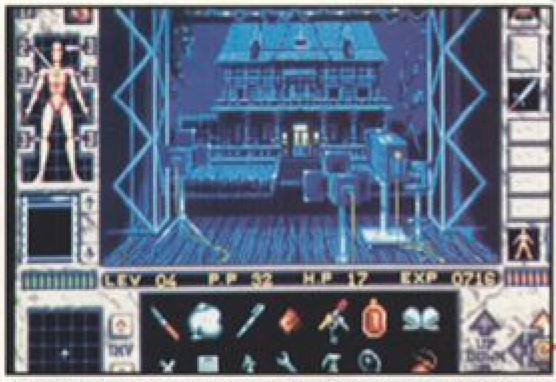


compare & contrast

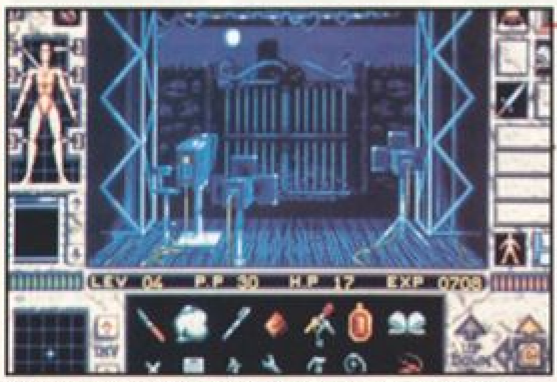
Seen as a pure role-playing game Elvira 2 fares poorly against the current RPG Benchmark holder Eye of the Beholder 2 (reviewed last month). Although Elvira sports better and more varied graphics (the different rooms really do look different, rather than being the same old section of corridor with alternative furnishings), there's a serious feeling of claustrophobia and constriction, of not being able to go where you want to simply because the program won't let you. Compare this with Beholder's laissez-faire exploratory style. Beholder is also better paced, with a gradual build up in pressure, as opposed to Elvira's long periods of nothing happening interspersed with brief but violent encounters (presumably intended to simulate the 'shock' nature of the horror genre). Elvira's most serious fault, as stated in the main review, is its annoying user interface which compares very unfavourably with Beholder's slick, all-encompassing character control.

ELVIRA 2

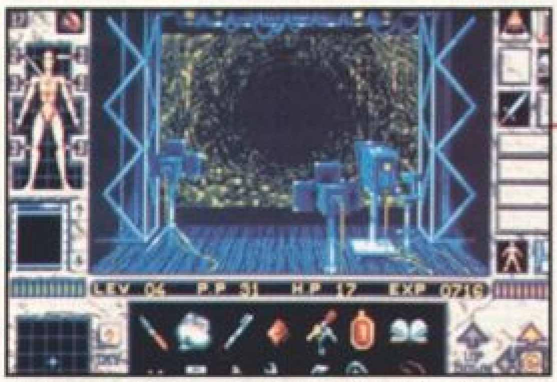
Elvira 2 starts quietly, apart from one or two horrific exceptions. The journey through the Studio car park and foyer is a good way of getting the player used to the game's controls, ready for the real troubles which start once the player enters the individual film studios.



Studio 2, where Elvira was filming *House Of Horror* before the beasty grabbed her. This set is packed with a mish-mash of B-movie ghoulies; vampires, ghouls, succubi and even piranhas! Every step of the way is packed with potentially terminal situations. Make sure you save the game as often as possible!



Studio 3, where the set for *It Came From Beyond The Grave* stands. Beyond these rusty iron gates lies a misty graveyard leading to a medieval church, where a priest lays slain by some unknown fiend. A bit of pushing and shoving around the pulpit reveals the entrance to the catacombs, populated by zombies and skeleton warriors.

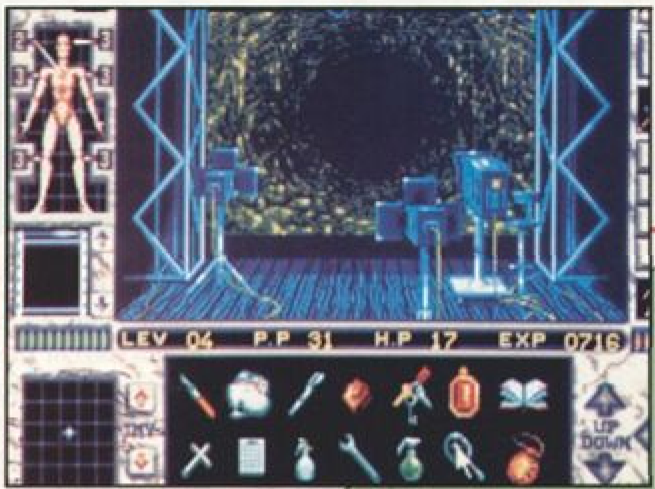


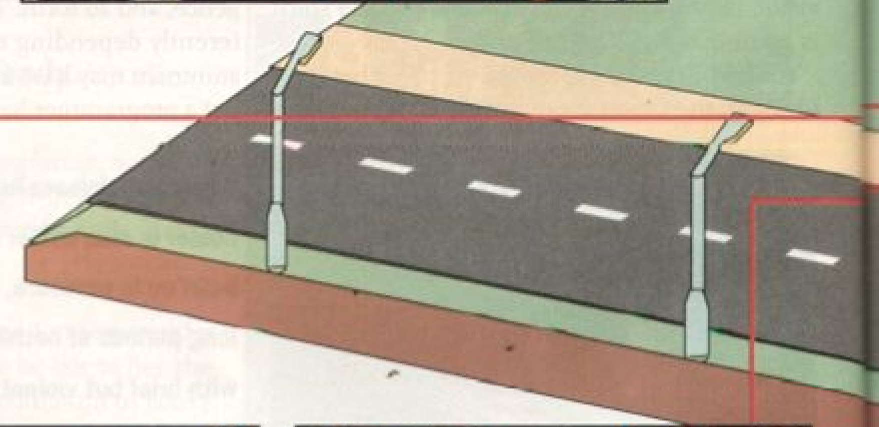
Studio 1 contains the eery other-worldly set to *Kiss Of The Spider.* A labyrinth of slimy tunnels, it's full to overflowing with giant caterpillars with a fondness for human flesh and basketball-sized blood-sucking mosquitoes. Once one of these babies gets its teeth into you, it doesn't let go until you're dead. Much like everything else in the game.

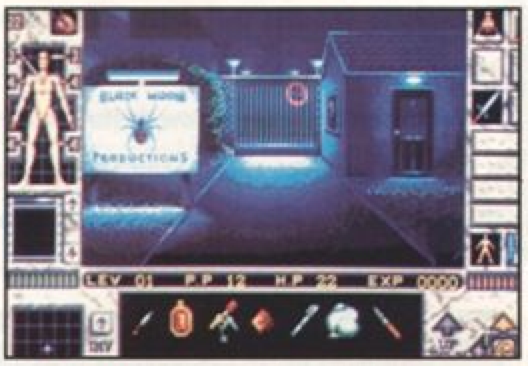
THE STUDIO SYSTEM

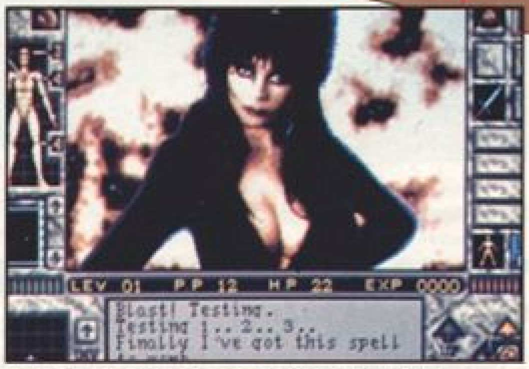
The Evil Spirit's influence has turned each of the three film studios into some form of dimensional gate, transporting the player into a huge network of rooms, caverns and tunnels far larger than the actual studio building itself. Not only does this mean that the game map can as large as the game's designers want it, it also gives a good excuse for a wide variety of very different scenery graphics and monsters. Thus one part of the game is set in a horror/SF setting, another in that stock stand-by, the old haunted house.

The receptionist's desk in the foyer is covered in nick-nacks, none of which are of any use to you. Pictures of Elvira, like the one on the wall behind the desk, pop up throughout the game, just to keep the lovelorn adventurer going (and to pander to Elvira's planet-sized ego).









```
Blast! Testing.
Testing 1...2...3..
Finally I've got this spell
```

START! This is where the adventure begins, with the player standing on the path ;eading to Black Widow Studios. The whole place is dark and apparently deserted, with no sign of the beloved Elvira. A couple of steps forward and - THRACKATAZOOM! - a vision of the voluptuous vamp appears before your eyes.

Obviously in no small amount of distress, Elvira hurriedly explains that an Evil Spirit in the form of a massive three-headed dog has possessed the Studio and has taken her hostage, with the intention of sacrificing her at midnight (no doubt as part of some sort of bizarre 'demon crossing over into our dimension' ceremony - you know how these stories tend to go).

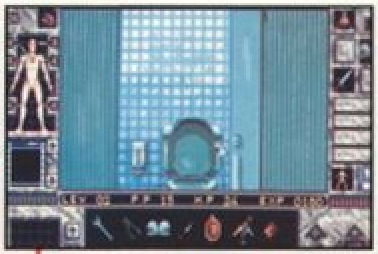
Elvira is just about to reveal where she's being held when the Spirit's power manages to quash the mirage, leaving nothing behind but Elvira's spell-tastic grimoire. Somehow realising that its magical mysteries are going to come in very handy later on you pick it up and stuff it in your pocket.

Girding your loins you set out to rescue your beloved. The Studio gates ahead are firmly locked, and there's no way you're going to be able to climb over the high fence without losing a couple of the things that make you so attractive to Elvira in the first place. Nope, brains not brawn is the way out here.

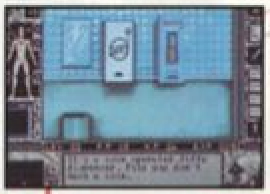
There's a rock lying by the side of the path. Pick it up - you never know when it's going to come in handy...

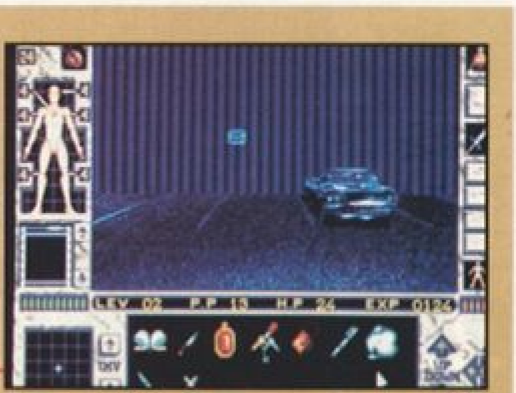
Hey! This is what Elvira fans have been waiting for - a healthy dose of toilet humour. You can raise and lower the seat, and even pull the handle. Who cares if it plays no important part in the game whatsoever, it's still good fun. Oooh, I'm feeling a bit flushed.

Black Widow Studios is split into three floors; this one, the basement and a second floor. All are accessed via this lift.

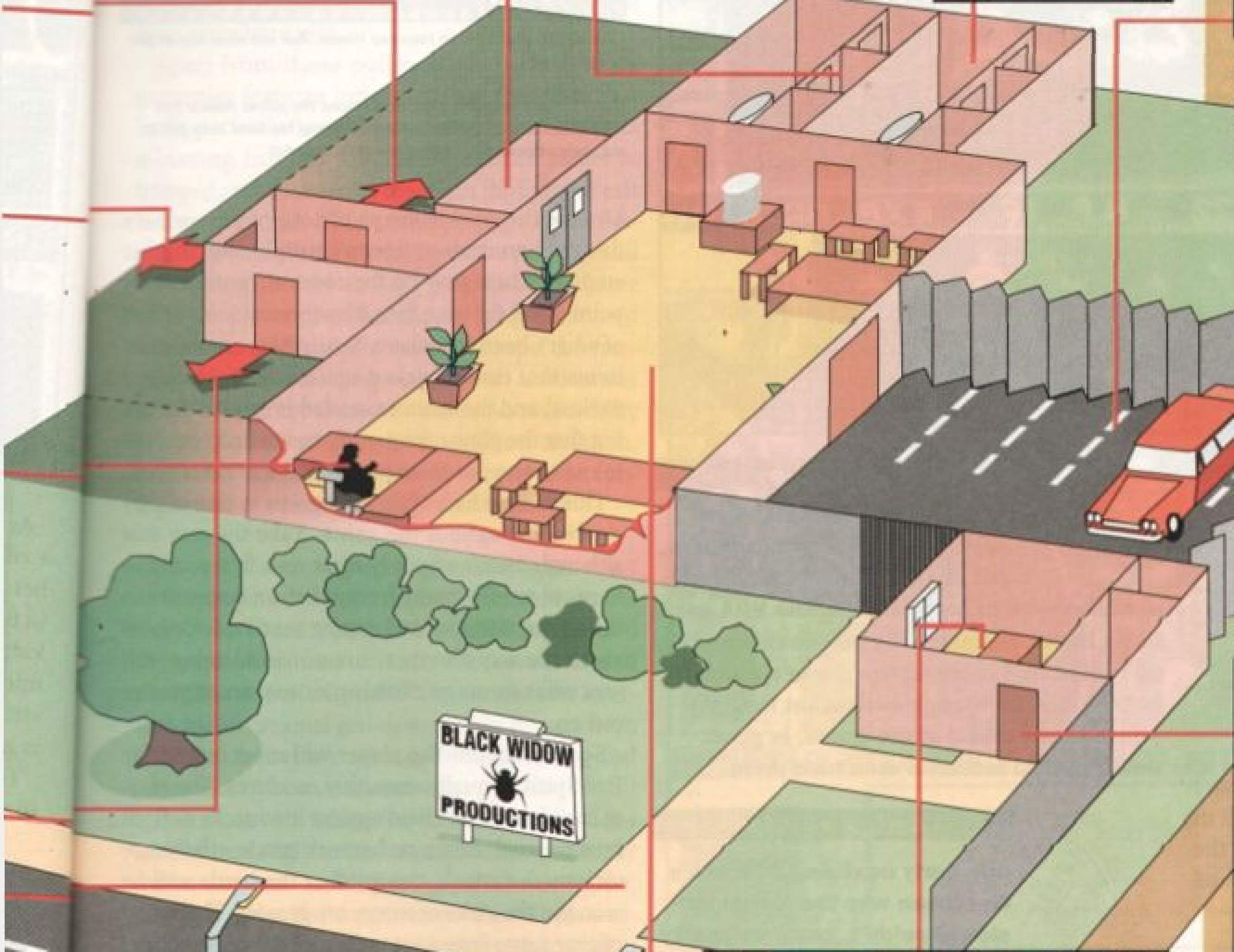


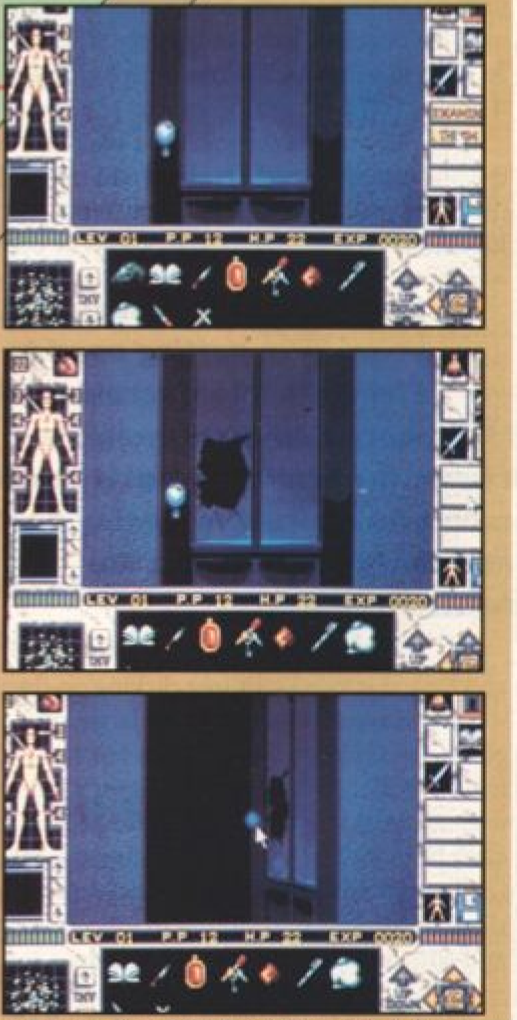
In the Lady's loos you discover a Jiffy machine. Perhaps you ought to stock up - Elvira's bound to be grateful when you finally rescue her...

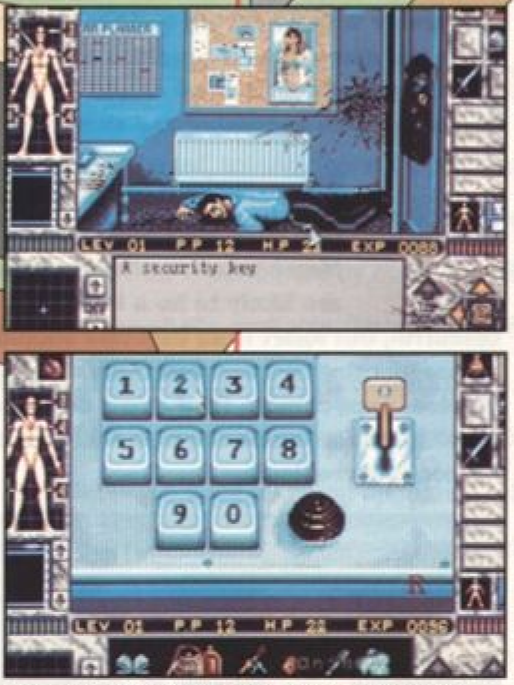




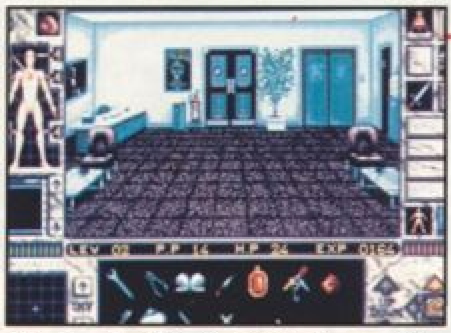
In the carpark you find Elvira's cadillac. Looking in the unlocked boot reveals a pair of wirecutters and a monkey wrench. Take 'em - Elvira won't mind, and they're sure to come in handy later. (Or will they? It's hard to tell.)







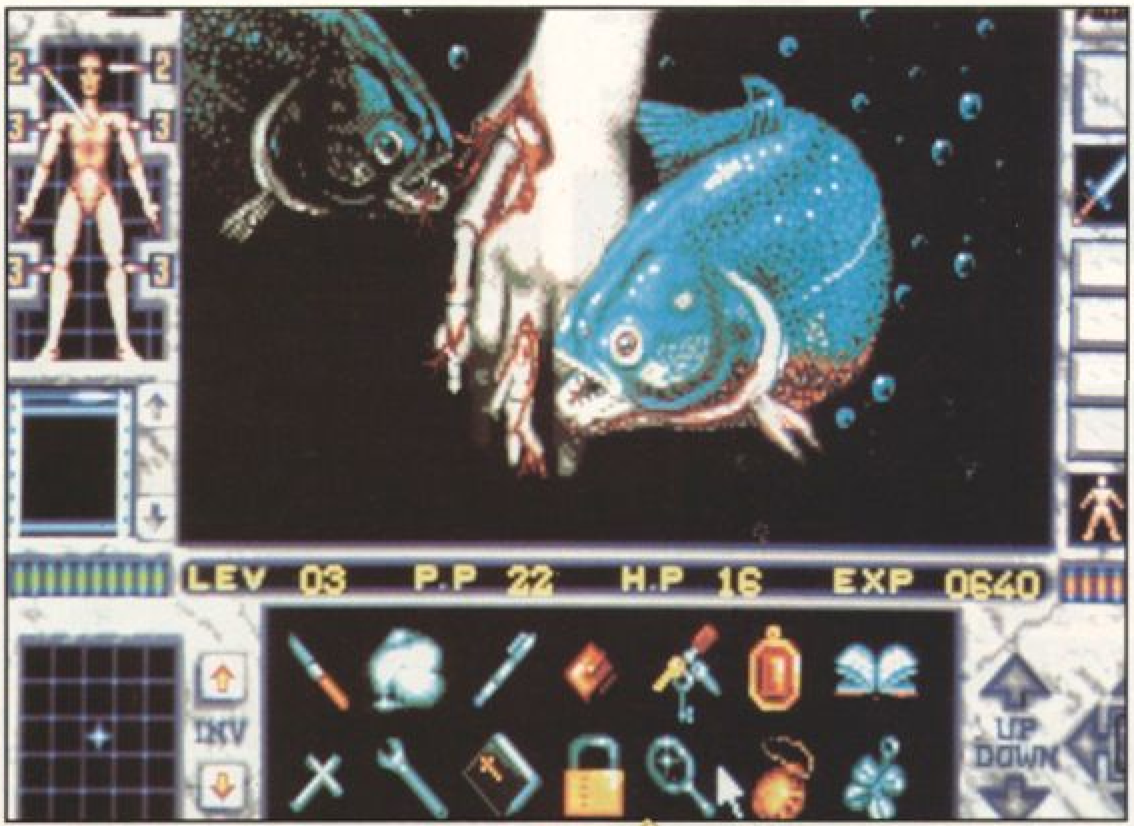
A security key



At last you're inside the Studio. Okay, so it's only the foyer but it's a start. It's difficult to know where to go next - there's a choice fo three doors and a lift! While deciding, take a look around here - you never know what you may find lying about.

Having broken into the seemingly-empty Studio security station, you innocently open a cupboard to discover the mutilated corpse of the guard, which slumps out of the darkness at you (the first shock sequence in the game - don't worry if you miss it, there are plenty more). Searching his body you find a small key, which just fits the lock on the Studio gate control. Hooray! You're in!

Wandering around you find the entrance to the Studio Security Station. And Security is right - it's locked up tight. Using the rock found earlier you smash a hole in the glass, and reaching through the shattered pane you locate the bolt with your fingers and open the door. The plot thickens...



57▶ pretty redundant feature, as generally this doesn't tell you anything about the object you can't already guess by looking at it.

By holding the mouse button down the arrow turns into a hand, and the object can be dragged into the player's inventory at the bottom of the page. Selecting an item in the inventory brings up a list of action icons at the side of the screen relating to what can be done with it (i.e. 'Open', 'Look In', 'Throw', etc).

Again, there are problems. For a start, why can't the player interact with an object while it's still in the game world, instead of having to put it in the inventory? And why can some objects be opened and looked inside by simply clicking on them in the action window (generally the larger ones, like coffins and chests), while others can't be looked inside until they're part of the player's inventory and others that you'd think could be looked in can't be looked in at all (like wardrobes), though in some rooms they can. This last point is particularly annoying, resulting in lots of tentative and largely redundant mouse clicking.

> ***f you don't mind investing some time getting used to Elvira 2's idiosyncrasies then you'll find more than your money's worth here, especially if you're the sort of person who slows down going past road accidents and cuts out the pictures from* Fangoria.**

Just as annoying is the fact that objects not dropped in the location they were originally found in disappear from view, although they are actually still there. To pick it up again the player has to click on the room inventory (which lists all the objects known to the player in that location) and drag the required objects into his own inventory.

PC version

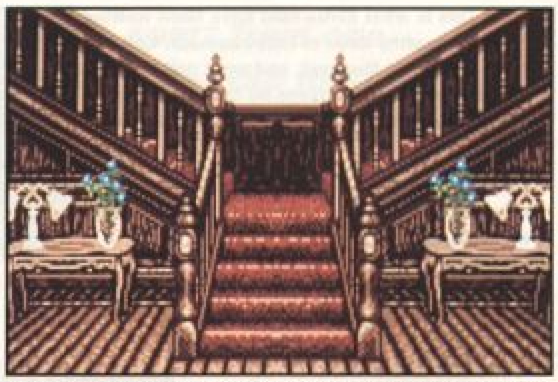
The graphics are well above average, sometimes excellent, but the use of colour couldn't really be said to be stretching the VGA card to its limits. Occasionally you could easily be fooled into thinking the game's running in EGA. Sound, though somewhat inappropriate to the mood of the game, is good. Best enjoyed installed on a hard drive.

Amiga version

Due early next month, there's no reason why the Amiga version shouldn't compare pretty favourably with its PC big brother. However, given the game's many graphics and large map size it's likely that there will be a fair amount of disk accessing and swapping.

ST version

Currently scheduled for a March release, the graphics are likely to be a little less colourful, but apart from that this should be a near-identical PC portover. Like the Amiga version, expect more than a few discs to be rattling around inside the box, with the corresponding problems.



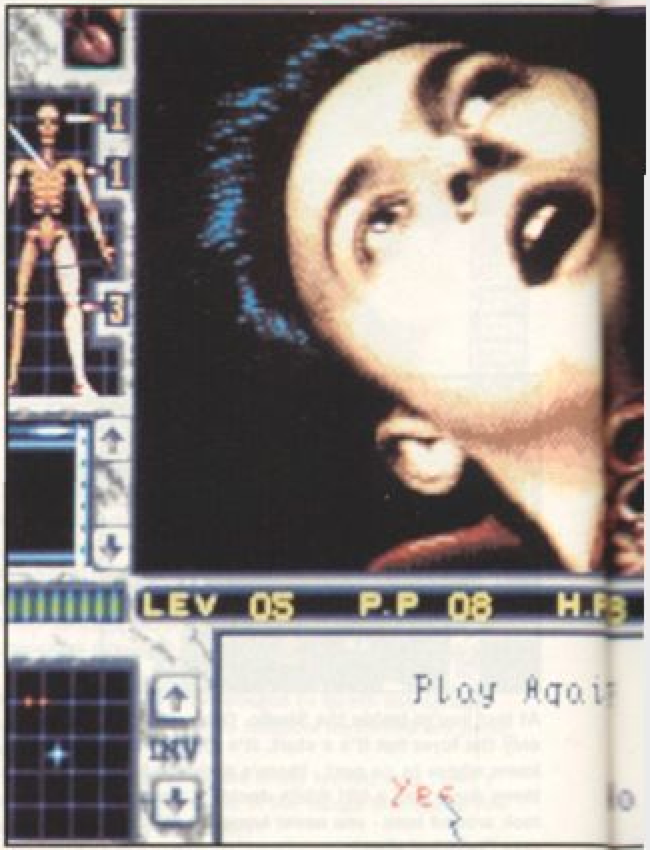
(Above) The stairs in the Haunted House. Ask not what lies at the top of them!

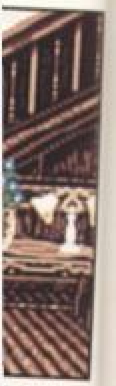
(Left) In the study of the Haunted House the player finds a fish tank with a key at the bottom of it. Dipping his hand in to get it out, he's attacked by vicious piranhas. Youch!!

Unless the player keeps a note of where he's dropped an item or doesn't mind retracing his steps and bringing up the room inventory every point along the way, then it's very easy to lose track of what's been left where. Since there are so many items that can be picked up (many of which are useless) and the amount carried is limited (meaning that the player frequently has to drop stuff off to make way for the new), this is a serious fault.

This serious lack of thought given to ease of play occurs throughout the game. Take the way that although there's a body lying at your feet, you have to move ten feet away from it before it appears in the action window and can be searched. Or how about the way that there are no visual aids to tell you what items of clothing or costumes you've put on.

Sooner or later the player will meet one of the Evil Spirit's equally unearthly creatures. The player can choose to defend against it's attacks or fight it in normal, fierce or berserk mode - the more vicious the attack, the quicker the battle will be won but the risks of injury are greater. The arrow cursor turns into a weapon and the player clicks





on the monster to carry out the attack. The player can also cast spells, assuming they've been mixed before battle commences. (See the 'I smell a spell!' box for more.)

But not everything is hostile. Those that aren't can be chatted to using the 'Talk' icon. This results in four conversation choices appearing, of which the player has to choose one. Depending on the other characters reply there are either more choices or the conversation abruptly ends. It's a well-worn system, and works no better or worse here than anywhere else.

Apart from those points made earlier, other gameplay features infuriate. Take the room that looks perfectly normal from outside but inside is a blazing inferno. Once entered, the player is trapped and doomed to die, even though the exit is clearly visible. This would perhaps be acceptable in a straight-forward adventure (though still infuriating), but in an RPG wouldn't it be fairer to let the player dive back out, suitably chastened and weakened? And why couldn't I repel the vampire when I was holding a cross (with another one in my inventory? Okay, so there's no reason why Horror Soft's vampires have to follow tradition, but some things do tend to be perceived as fundamental to certain monsters' natures.

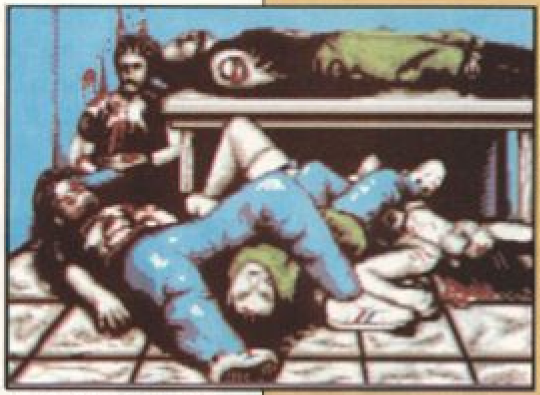
Oh dear, I seem to be going on a bit again, don't I? The reasons for this are simply because I came away from Elvira 2 disappointed - although I liked the game, I wanted to like it a lot more. The ill thought-out, basically rather unfriendly user interface and occasional gameplay quirks detract from what is otherwise a reasonably engrossing and entertaining horror adventure.

The moments when the player actually does meet some nightmarish creature are generally well-animated and have good shock value. However, given the camp nature of the Elvira character, one wonders why the programmers didn't put the accent on humour instead of gore. Indeed, apart from the occasional appearances from the Lady herself to provide hints when you're stuck (a nice touch, this), the Elvira link is tenuous to say the least.

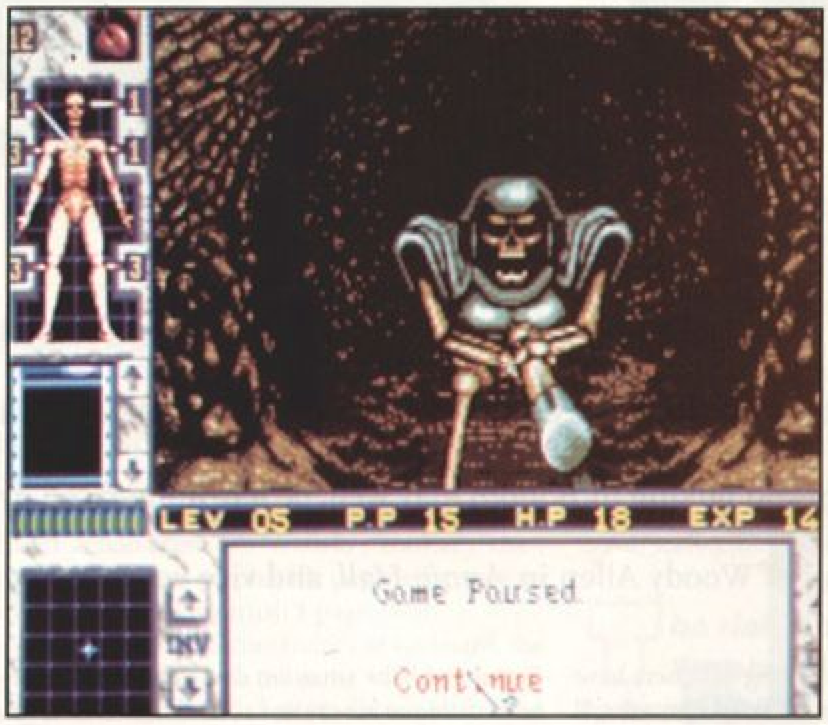
Still, if you don't mind having to invest a small amount of time getting used to Elvira 2's idiosyncrasies then you'll find you get more than your money's worth here, especially if you're the sort of person who slows down going past road accidents and cuts out the pictures from Fangoria. Others expecting to be gripped from the word go, especially given the game's slow build up to the action, are likely to be disappointed.

Still, great navarones...

● **David Upchurch**



Having fainted at the sight of a zombie, you awake to find yourself here, in the zombie's pantry. Strangely, the sight of all these mutilated bodies has absolutely no adverse effect on you.



H.P
EXP 1502
UP
DOWN

(Left) Dead! The player is no more. Every death scene features the player's head viewed from exactly the same angle, but with a variety of gashes, tears, burns or whatever overlaid on top depending on the cause of death. Here the player seems to have lost his head.

(Far left) In the Studio basement the player meets this Red Indian mystic, formerly the caretaker. The only one who seems to be taking the situation calmly, he quietly explain that he can banish the Evil Spirit back to its own plane if the player brings him his three magic items. Why he can't do it himself I don't know.

I SMELL A SPELL!

Being a game based around Elvira it's no surprise to see magic rearing its unnatural head. Spells have to be mixed before they can be cast. This is performed by consulting Elvira's spell book which lists the spells available. These range from Ice Dart, which throws a magical shard of ice into the screen, to Holy Blast, a lightning bolt highly effective against the Undead.

By selecting a spell a screen appears explaining its effect, the ingredients needed to create it and the experience level that has to be reached before the player can mix it.

A spell, once created, produces an icon in the player's inventory window. By clicking on the icon when in battle, the spell is cast. But be careful! Each casting uses up the player's valuable Power Points, a sort of psychic power rating. Run out of Power Points and you've run out of spells!

RATINGS

Occasionally atmospheric graphics.

Well-animated 'horror' scenes.

Cumbersome, unfriendly control interface.

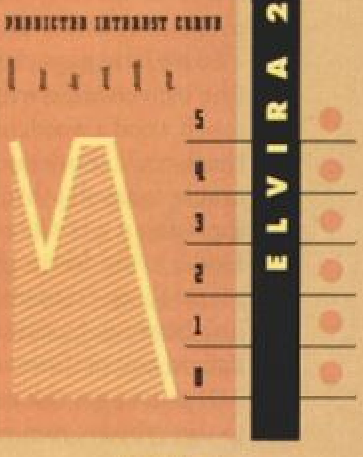
Mood of the tunes out of step with that of the game.

Annoying 'no way out' dead ends.

740 PC RATING

G	IQ	A	FF
7	6	7	7

Although initial impressions are good, with some attractive graphics and sound to draw you in, the dull early locations and frustratingly fiddly control system result in a brief lull in interest. However, once the player gets into the game and learns to accept the interface's foibles he'll discover that there's a decent, if not exactly state-of-the-art, RPG in there. As RPG go it rates fairly high on the toughness scale, and the arbitrary death events don't help things either, but there are enough chills n' spills to keep you going until the voluptuous Elvira is in your manly arms.



Genre Adventure
Publisher US Gold
Developer Lucasfilm Games
Price £35.99

MONKEY ISLAND2

LeCHUCK'S REVENGE

Comedy, as any top stand-up will tell you, is not a funny business. It's *so* subjective. People who split their sides at the sight of Rik Mayall farting and puking in *Bottom* may well be left stone-faced by the cerebral sparring of Woody Allen in *Annie Hall*, and vice versa.

This given, it's hardly surprising that there have been few games attempting to raise even a small smile, let alone a laugh. And of those games that tried to tickle the ol' funny bone, the number that succeeded can be counted on the fingers of one hand. One of this select band, which includes Infocom's Leather Goddesses of Phobos and Sierra's Leisuresuit Larry and Space Quest series, is Lucasfilm's The Secret of Monkey Island. A phenomenal success, a sequel was inevitable - and here it is.

So how have Revenge's creators got around the elusively slippery nature of comedy? Simple. Like Secret, Revenge's writers have scattered their gag shot wide and hopefully ensured that most people's funny bone will get hit, one way or another.

So we have gags ranging from the plain stupid (the conversation with the carpenter about how much wood a woodchuck would chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood being a particularly memorable example) through straightforward puns (how about a book on voodoo called 'The Joy Of Hex'?) to the downright obscure (the Men of Low Moral Fiber - remember them? - discussing the link between bumming around all day, existentialism and performance art).

Of course, the risk here is that by trying to appeal to everybody you end up pleasing nobody. Fortunately, the situation descriptions and character dialogue are crafted so well that even if you don't find the current gag side-clutchingly, falling-off-the-chair funny, chances are it'll still make you chuckle or smile at the very least. You get the impression that the team at Lucasfilm Games really enjoyed creating Revenge, and this sense of fun is conveyed to the player, maintaining mood and atmosphere even on the rare occasions when a joke falls completely flat.

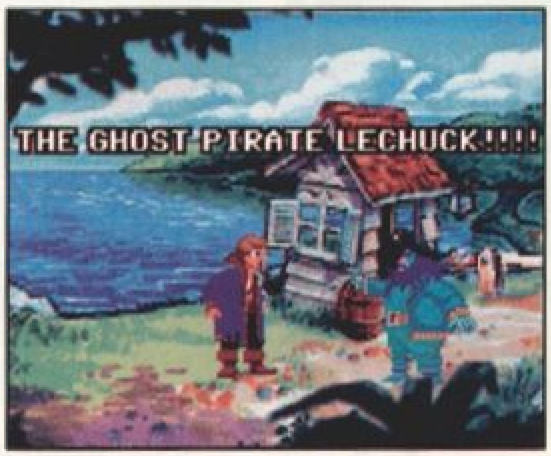
And for my money (bearing in mind the above that comedy is a subjective beast), Revenge is consistently far funnier than Secret. Being a sequel, the player is already familiar with the central character of Guybrush Threepwood and his history, so there's plenty of mirth potential right from the start as Guybrush bumps into old acquaintances both good and bad and catches up on news.

The story, which takes place a few months after Secret, starts neatly, with Guybrush hanging from a slender vine over a vast pit, a massive chest of treasure in one hand. How did he get there? Well, as he explains to Governor Marley who discovers his plight, it's a long story...

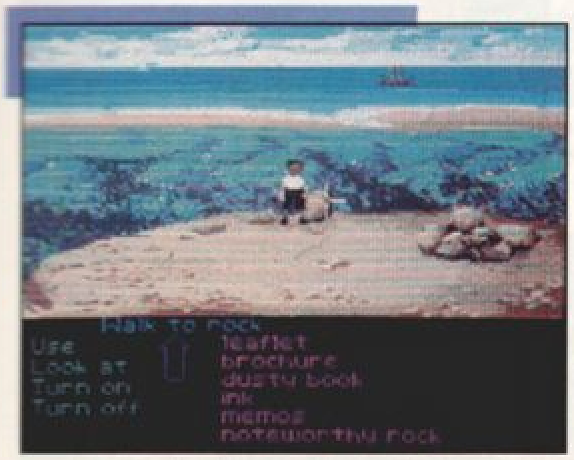
...Which is where the player comes in. Guybrush may be a little older (as evidenced by the speckling of bum fluff on his chin) but he's certainly none the wiser. Having bored everyone within earshot (and those beyond) with endless recounting of his epic victory against the pirate LeChuck, he decides it's time to get a new story and so embarks on a new quest - to find the legendary treasure known as Big Whoop.

Unfortunately Guybrush's current port of call, Scabb Island, is ruled by the bullying Largo LeGrande, former henchmen of the scabrous LeChuck. Largo has decreed that none may leave Scabb Island without paying an extortionate berthing fee - the so-called Largo Embargo. Of course, it's not really an Embargo at all, but Largo Tax doesn't rhyme.

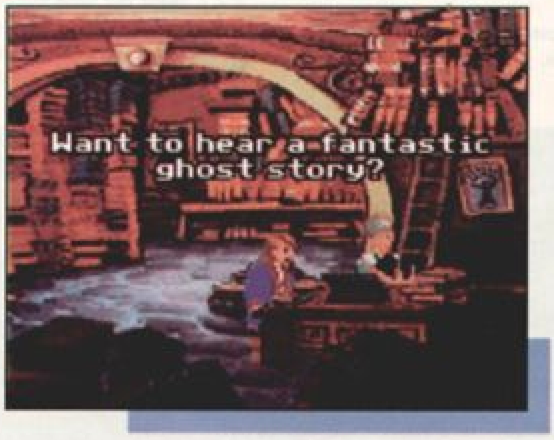
So if Guybrush is going to go anywhere, he's going to have to get rid of Largo first. Unfortunately, Guybrush's attempt to rid Scabb of the scoundrel go seriously awry (mainly thanks to his obnoxious big-headed bragging) and results



(Above) Don't panic! It's not actually LeChuck at all - it's some bloke wearing a fancy-dress costume for the Booty Island Mardi Gras. After a shock like that, it's no surprise that Guybrush has to change his clothes too.
(Right) Occasionally the program cuts away from the player's/Guybrush's antics and presents a short 'Meanwhile..' sequence, like this one in LeChuck's black fortress.



Blimey! We seem to be giving them away like the unwanted nut cracknels left rattling around the bottom of the Xmas tin of Quality Street, don't we? Come on, you know what I'm talking about. Do I have to spell it out? Yeah, Monkey Island 2 is the new ACE Adventure Benchmark. As a game it stands head and shoulders over the previous incumbent, The Secret of Monkey Island (am I seeing a trend starting here). Why? Well, the adventure's bigger, the story's funnier, the graphics are prettier and the music is simply exquisite. Dammit, Lucasfilm Games have even improved the user interface. Monkey Island 2 is an instant classic. What's the betting it'll still be the ACE Benchmark when *Monkey Island* 3 swings in?


Want to hear a fantastic ghost story?

in the unwanted resurrection of an old adversary. Yup, badder, madder and smellier than ever, LeChuck is back - and he wants Guybrush BAD.

Although Revenge is definitely a member of the adventure genre, it has to be said that if an adventurer from the early eighties, the days of The Hobbit, Sherlock Holmes et al, fell into some sort of deep sleep and awoke today, he'd barely recognise Revenge as belonging to that once dust-dry genre. And while the Rip Van Adventurer purist may mourn the passing of text-only descriptions and idiosyncratic parsers, there's no denying that the popularity of the adventure genre today is largely attributable to developments like 256-colour graphics and easy-to-use icon-driven interfaces.

Control over Guybrush is via the SCUMM system. The display window is split into three main areas. By far the largest is the graphic window, displaying the current location, Guybrush and any other characters present. Below this is a small list of 'action' icons (i.e 'Walk to', 'Look at', 'Use', etc) and beside a graphically depicted inventory of any items in Guybrush's possession.

Using mouse (recommended) or keyboard, the player can interact with the game 'world' by selecting an action icon and then a location or an object (from the graphics window or the inventory) to act on. Thus, by selecting 'Walk to' and clicking on the graphics window Guybrush - no surprises here - walks to the area selected. Likewise, select 'Use' and, say, a bell and Guybrush will ring the bell. Occasionally a second item will have to be selected, i.e. 'Use'-ing a knife will require a second item be selected for it to act on, such as a piece of rope.

Conversations can be started with the people that Guybrush meets by selecting the 'Talk to' icon. Three or four pieces of dialogue appear at the bottom of the screen, and it's up to the player to select whichever he thinks is appropriate. The character then replies, and then the player gets more conversation choices. The system has it good and bad points.

On the plus side it's easy to use - no wrestling with a complex parser here ("I don't understand 'Chat'", etc). Also, conversations aren't entered into unless they're necessary for the game's progress (in which case the characters rebuff any advances), thus avoiding lots of frustrating and ultimately fruitless chats with people who can't help you.

On the down side it can be annoying that when the choices come up and there are two options you want to try out in the same list, frequently one option won't appear in the next batch of questions, involving a fair amount of restarting conversations until the required selection comes up again. Annoying.

A fair amount of playfulness is required on the player's part to wring the full humour from the character interactions, a willingness to select off-the-wall conversation pieces just to find out what the equally bizarre response is and the stamina to run with a joke until you reach its punchline.

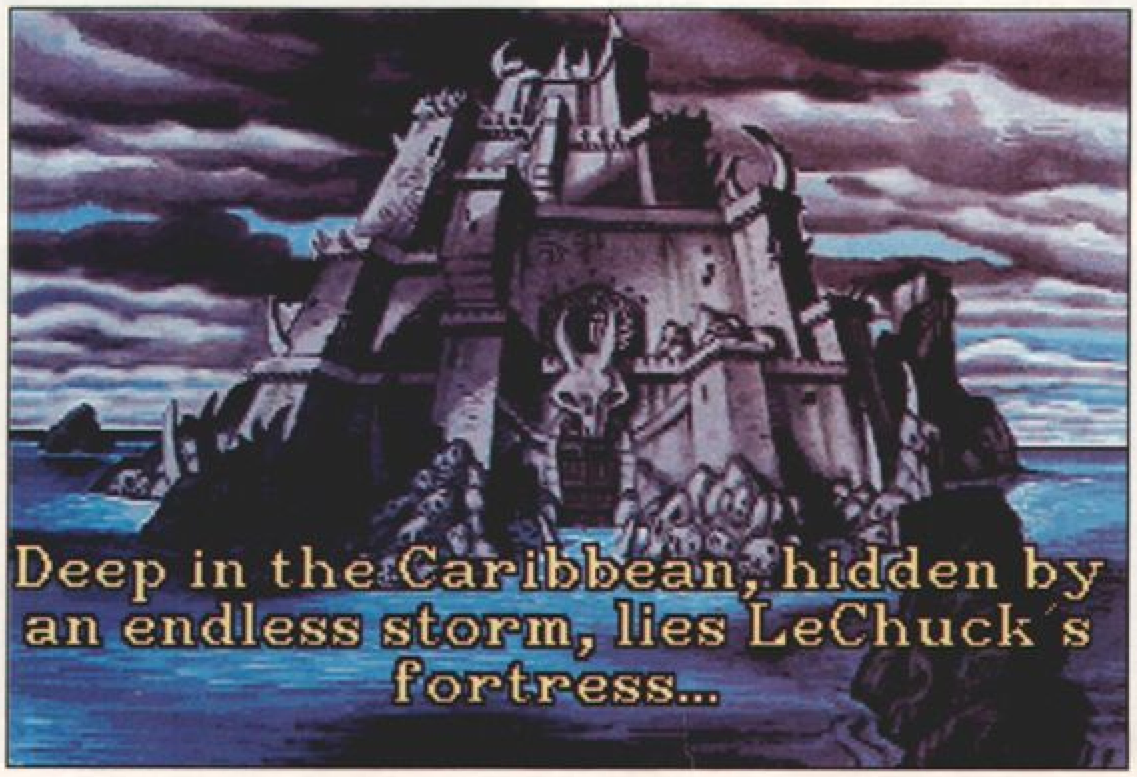
The risk with Monkey Island 2's scattershot approach to humour is that by trying to appeal to everybody you end up pleasing nobody.

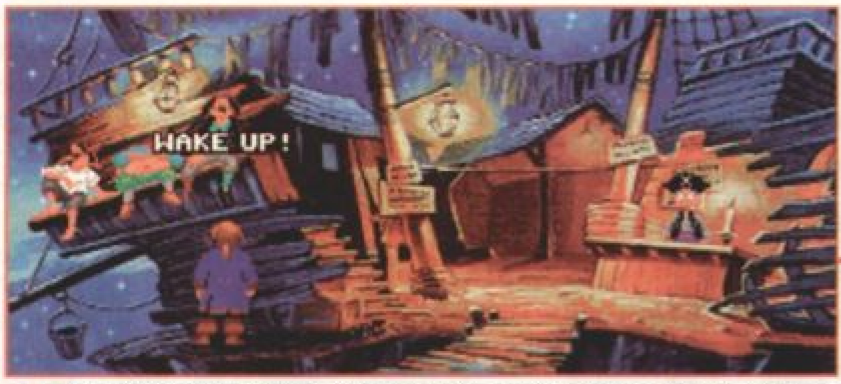
It's interesting to note that the SCUMM user interface is described as a 'story system' as opposed to an adventure system. The emphasis is on drawing the player into a (hopefully) exciting and amusing adventure rather than testing their vocabulary range and typing skills, a point underlined by the fact that the number of 'action' icons has been cut down from Secret's twelve to Revenge's nine.

Rip Van Adventurer would probably be more than a little astounded by the Revenge's graphics and - sacrilege! - sound. I also think he'd be very impressed - I know I was.

Lucasfilm Games have taken a leaf out of Sierra/Dynamix's book and created the graphics by digitising painted artwork and touching it up. The results are truly exquisite - they have an organic 'natural' look, far removed from the usual hard-lined graphics drawn with a paint package. Some of the scenes in the town of Woodtick, a run-down assortment of moored ships, look very similar to preview shots from the forthcoming

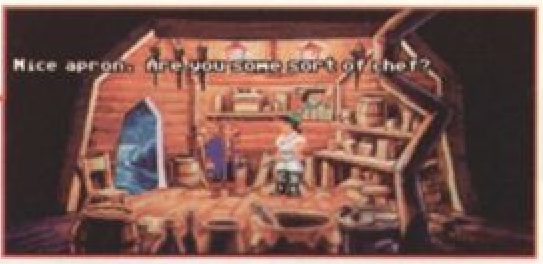
▶66

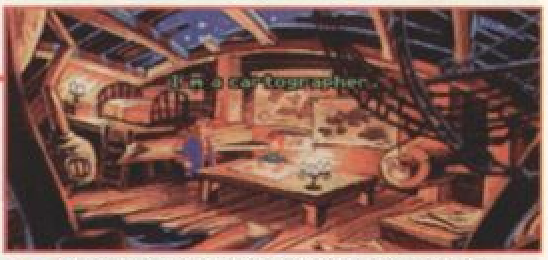

Deep in the Caribbean, hidden by an endless storm, lies LeChuck's fortress...



6 (Above) Ah! Old friends! Yes, it's those Men of Low Moral Fiber again. They've got a pet rate, called the Muenster Monster because it's passion for all things cheesy, running around. If only you could capture perhaps it you could slip it into that cook's pot...

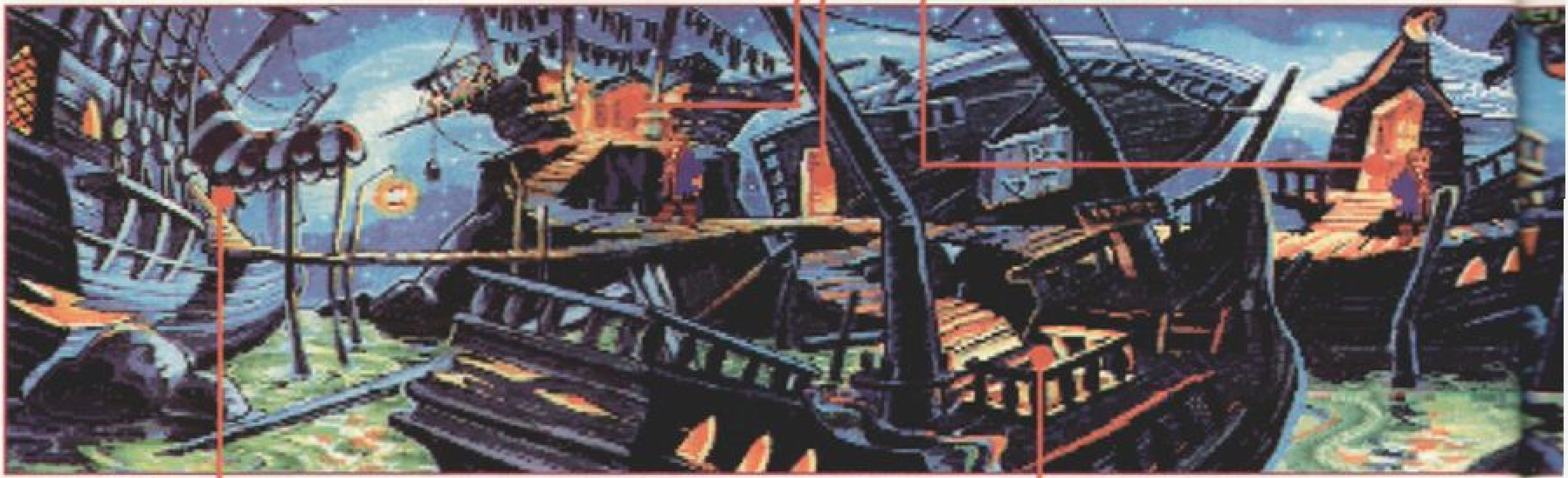
Behind the desk stands Mad Marty, the town's clothes cleaner. Wonder if he's got some embarassing item of Largo's clothing? Even if he does, you can't get it without a laundry reclaim ticket.

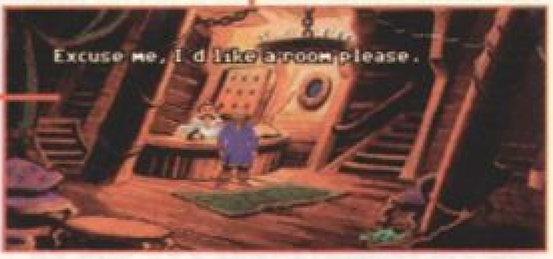


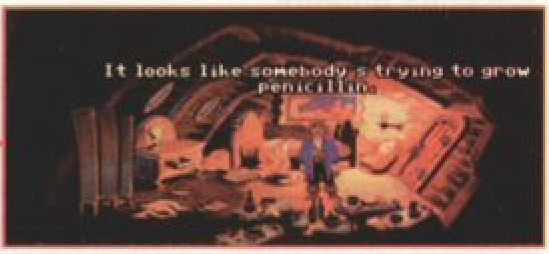


3 (Top)Meet Woody the carpenter. He may be a skilled craftsman, but even he can't make the one thing that would do the town some good - a voodoo doll of Largo.

(Above) Meet Wally, probably the best map maker in the whole of the Carribean.





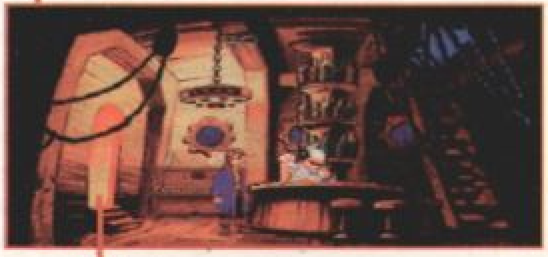


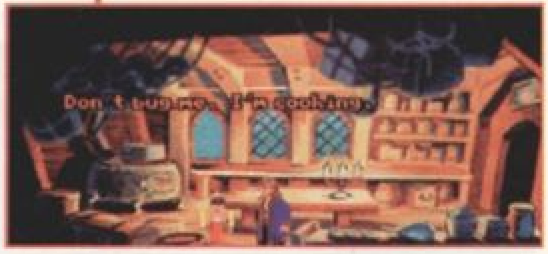
7 (Left) The town's inn is run by this surly brute. There's only one room - Largo's. Perhaps if you caused a diversion of some sort you could sneak into the fiend's room? And I wonder what baby crocs eat?

8 (Left) At last you're in Largo's domicile - and isn't it a mess! Foor scraps are scattered on the floor and clothes are left lying about. Tut, tut! What can you find here to help you? (Did you know Largo wears a toupé?)

4 (Right) The barman can make any drink you care to to name, but he can't make what this town really needs - a voodoo doll of Largo. (By now you should be getting the subtle hints about how to get rid of the villain.)

5 (Right) You need money -and to get money you need a job. If only you could make this unlikeable cook foul up... Perhaps something small and hairy in the cooking pot would do the trick...?





SCABB ISLAND (AGAIN)

Guybrush's first port of call and his last, unless he can rid the place of Largo. However, this is just the beginning of his troubles. Largo manages to resurrect LeChuck, who is intent on revenge. The only solution is to find Big Whoop (remember that?), rumoured to be the only way of destroying LeChuck once and for all. It's location is provided by a map, torn into four parts and scattered hither and tither.

PHATT ISLAND

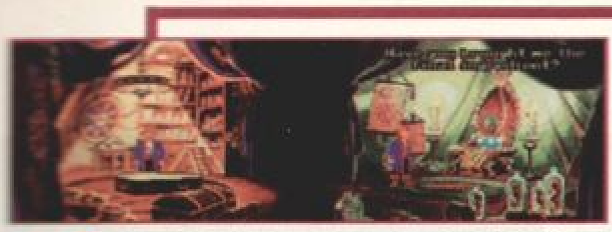
The Governor of Phatt Island is a bloated monster of a man, a sort of 18th Century Jabba the Hutt. As immoral as he is ugly, the Governor imprisons Guybrush on reaching the island, with the intention of claiming the bounty placed on our hero's head by LeChuck. Thrown into a dank, dark cell, Guybrush's only hope of escape is to get the vicious guard dog to bring him the cell key. But how?

BOOTY ISLAND

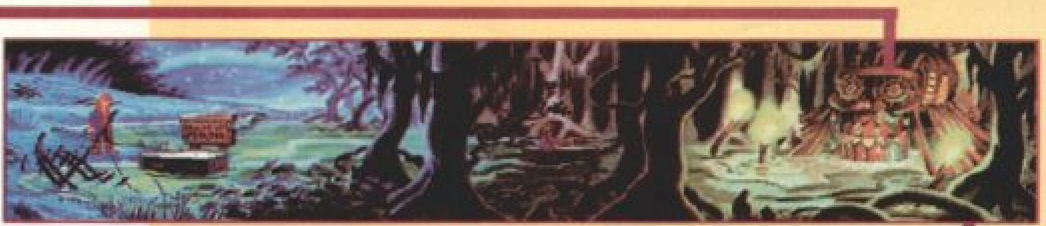
The Governor of Booty Island is the beautiful Elaine Marley, a old flame of Guybrush's from the previous adventure. This isle's a pleasant antidote to Phatt - it's the location of the famed Mardi Gras and the popular spitting contest.

(Right) Captain Dread only knows how to get to three islands - just as well they're the only ones you need to visit, isn't it? The player indicates where he wants to go by simply clicking on the desired island.

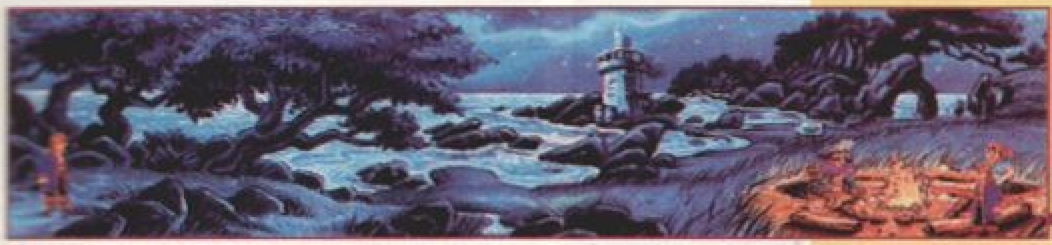
s
e one
oodoo
n the



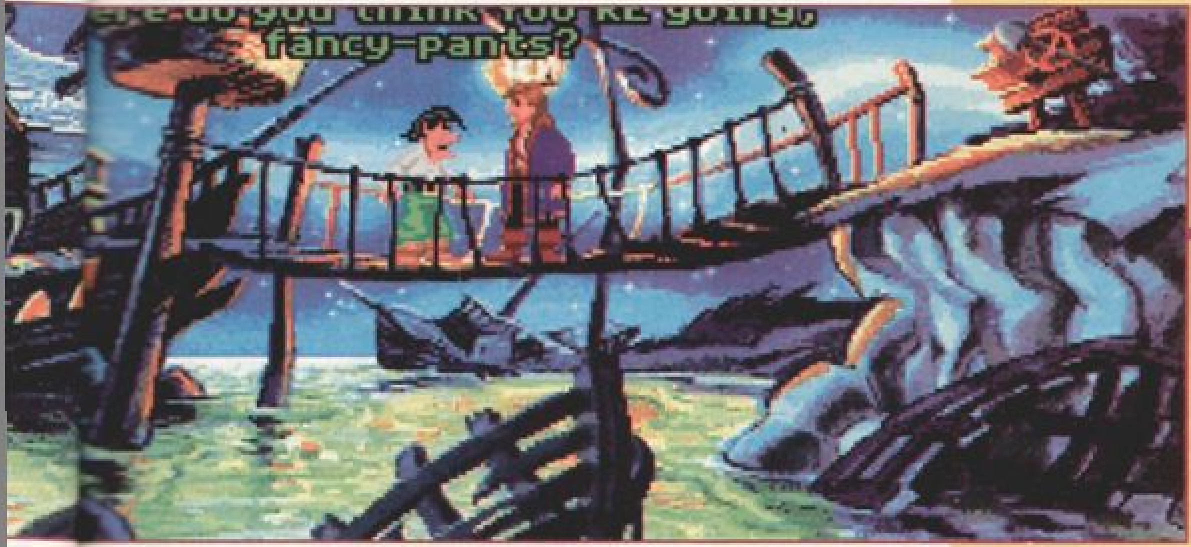
13 (Above) The Voodoo Lady can't make a doll of Largo until she has four vital ingredients - something of the Thread, something of the Head, something of the Body and something of the Dead. The adventure begins!



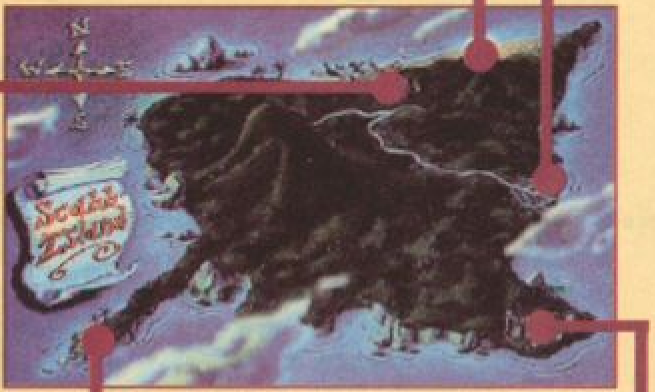
12 (Above) Who knows how to make a voodoo doll? Why, the Voodoo Lady of course! She lives in the heart of the spooky swamp, entailing a spine-tingling journey in an open-topped coffin to the International House of Mojo...



1 (Above) The adventure starts here round the beach camp fire near the town of Woodtick. Bart and Fink, your two buddies, are getting pretty sick of hearing how you got rid of LeChuck (for the *n*th time). With a flourish you announce that you're on a new quest - to find the legendary Big Whoop!



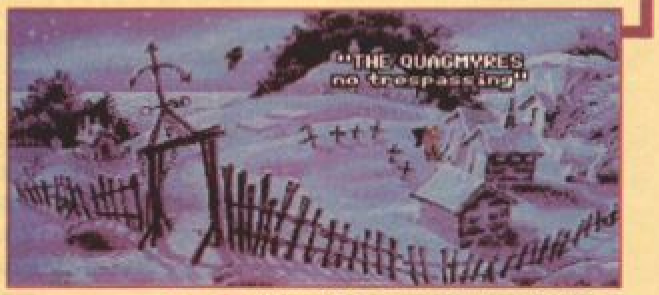
2 (Left) Things don't start too well. No sooner have you entered Woodtick in search of a ship than you're mugged by Largo and all your money is stolen.



9 (Above) Scabb Island in all its glory. As you trot from place to place you'll be seeing this map screen a lot.

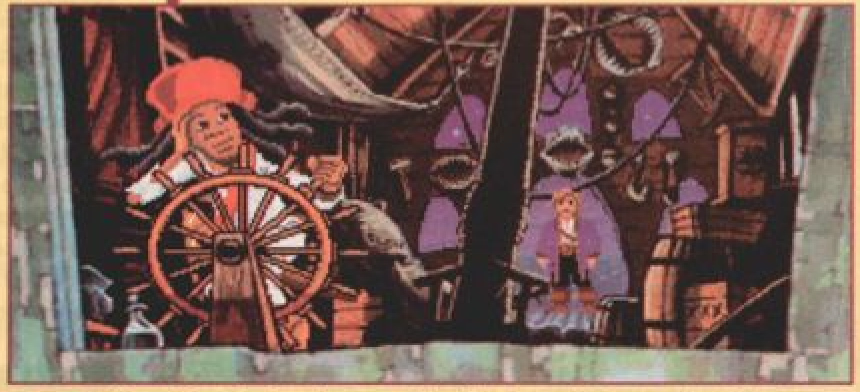
BOOTY-FULL

Guybrush's quest starts on Scabb Island. To paraphrase Obi-wan Kenobi in Star Wars, you'll never find a more wretched hive of scum and villainy, with the main scum and villain being the bullying, vindictive Largo LeGrande. Follow the plot by following the numbers!

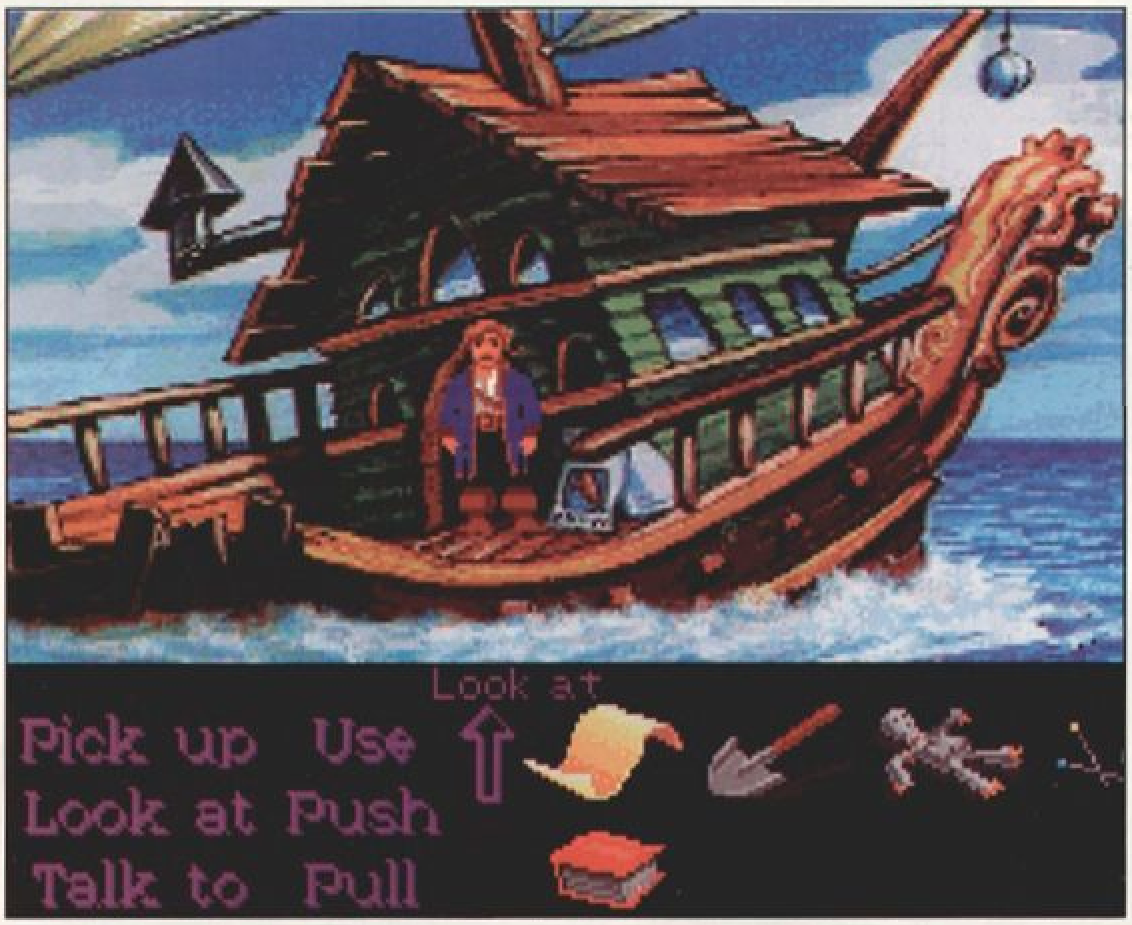


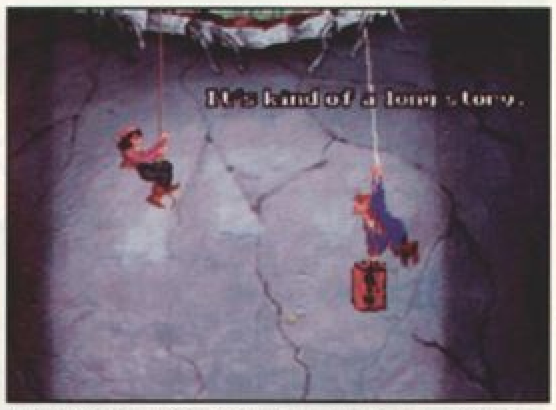
10 (Above) The graveyard. Here lies the body of the pirate LeChuck. Thank goodness he's dead... Or is he?

SCABB
PHATT
BOOTY



11 (Above) Captain Dread, owner of the Jolly Rasta. He's more than willing to charter his ship to you, but he can't leave the island until Largo lifts his hefty tax. If only he had a... Alright, enough already, so you need a voodoo doll!





(Above) The intro, with Guybrush hanging over a vast pit from a slender vine, a heavy chest of treasure in one hand. When Governor Marley discovers him and asks how he got there, he replies "Well, it's a long story" and the game begins.
(Left) Captain Dread's ship, with Guybrush aboard and ready for adventure. What on Earth is that seed going to be used for?

63▸ Steven Spielberg's Peter Pan update *Hook*. Given that Industrial Light & Magic, another Lucasfilm division, are responsible for that film's special FX, one wonders if this is entirely coincidental...

A certain, less cultured, member of the ACE staff has complained that he thinks the graphics look 'messy' but then he likes *Sonic the Hedgehog* (I'm naming no names) so what does he know? A more serious criticism is that the highly-detailed drawings occasionally make it difficult to discern pick-uppable items from background detail - entailing lots of speculative 'scanning' of the backgrounds with the cursor.

Just as beautiful are the character animations - at least they are in long shot. By necessity, given the size of the figures, the animation is very broad and cartoon-like, but they give pointers to the characters' personalities. It works in similar way that radio drama or a book works - because you only have limited information to go on, you subconsciously fill in character details and nuances yourself.

And it's because of this participation on the player's part that when the view occasionally cuts to a close up of a character the results are less impressive. What had previously largely been left to the imagination is made explicit, and because the animation is limited (generally being restricted to gross mouth movements) the effect is disappointing. If this sounds harsh it isn't meant to be - the animation is no worse than that seen in any other game - it's just that because the rest of the game works so well these atmosphere-busting scenes stand out.

This minor flaw (and the inevitable jerky scrolling) aside, the graphics in Revenge ooze quality. There are other minor visual effects so subtle that at first you don't even notice them - the way figures walking in dark areas of the screen darken as well, the out-of-focus foregrounds and backgrounds that draw your eye into 'centre stage' - that confirm Revenge as a true graphics masterpiece.

Revenge is the first Lucasfilm Game to use the new iMUSE sound system, an acronym for interactive MUsic and Sound Effects. First impressions are that it's merely a means of dovetailing one piece of music into another (i.e. smoothly changing from the 'street' music into the 'inn' music). Nice enough and big improvement over the abrupt cuts between themes in other games, but hardly stunning.

However, it's actually far more complex and impressive than that. The music also changes depending on how the game is progressing. Thus, if Guybrush gets into an argument with someone the music will take on a more strident and aggressive tone. Likewise, perform a certain action and an appropriate piece of dynamic music will be woven into the current musical backdrop.

It works beautifully, especially because the music is so good anyway. There are two scenes early on in the game where it's especially effective. One is in the graveyard, where Guybrush intends to exhume a grave in search of LeChuck's remains. As Guybrush approaches the grave the already sombre music grows even more ominous, and when he digs into the wet earth the music builds to a crescendo, accompanied by flashes of lightning. Marvellous.

PC Version

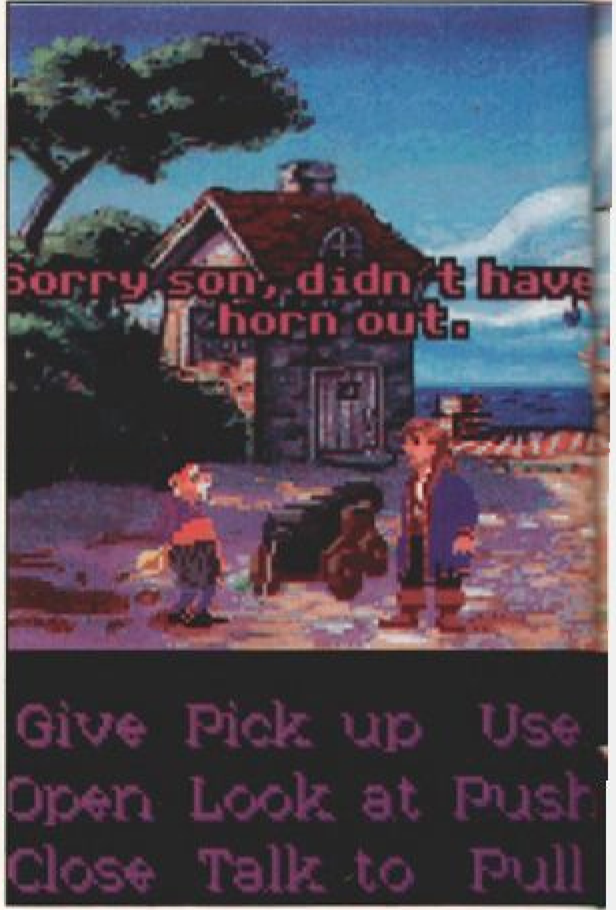
If you haven't got a soundcard then buy one now, because playing Monkey Island 2 without the superbly atmospheric music is only half the experience - it's like eating liver without onions. Although best enjoyed in VGA to take advantage of the gorgeous backdrops, the strength of the game - its marvellous plotting and off-the-wall humour - survives completely intact in EGA.

Amiga Version

Although still trapped in the depths of conversion Hell, Lucasfilm Games are confident that some form of IMUSE will be implemented on the Amiga. Also promised are full 32-colour graphics. However, be warned that this will be a multidisc 1Mb-only quest! Amiga owners should be able to chuckle at LeChuck's Revenge come late February.

ST Version

Cross your fingers and start praying, because ST version's fate is still undecided.



Equally impressive is the scene where Guybrush visits the Voodoo Lady in the swamp. As our hero paddles through the musty waters (in an open coffin, no less) the spooky music gets even more mysterious. Ooh, it sends shivers up your spine! The iMUSE system is also used to produce some neat aural jokes, like the *Indiana Jones* theme that pops up when Guybrush swings across a chasm on a rope. And I swear I heard a snatch of *The Terminator* theme when Guybrush says "I'll be back".

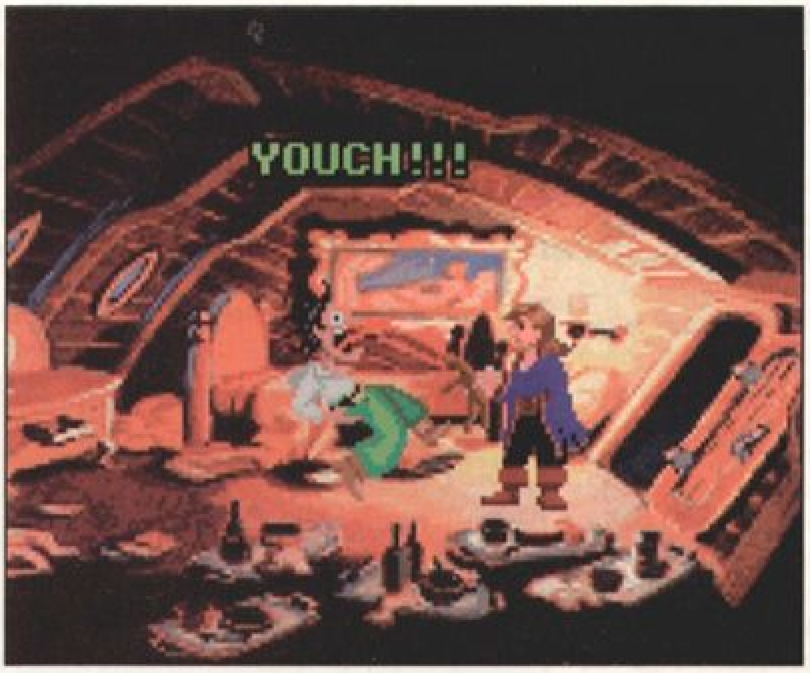
The adventure itself is well-structured. Although a very big game, the designers have cleverly restricted the player to Scabb Island at first (via the Largo Embargo) so it's not too daunting. The puzzles are fairly logical and rarely frustrating. Often you know what you want to do but not how, requiring some application of imagination to the materials in hand to achieve the required aims.

> **N*igh-on faultlessly executed, beautifully written and enchantingly funny, Monkey Island 2 is a landmark game that really has to be seen - and heard - to be believed.***

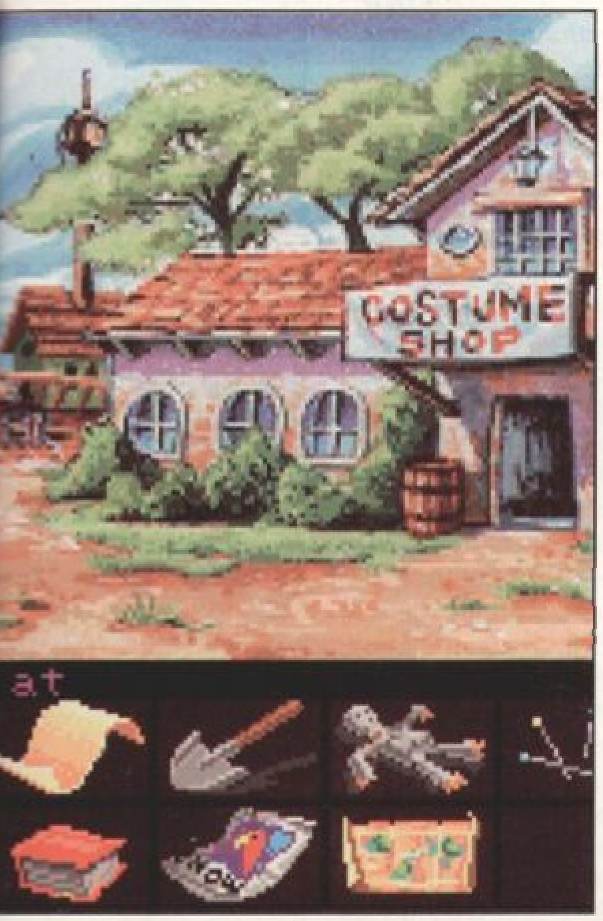
The accent is firmly on puzzle solving rather than avoiding dying. Although this is good from one point of view (you can feel free to try out even the most outlandish ideas without the game coming to an abrupt end), it does mean there's a serious lack of real threat or danger. Given that the story centres around pirates, who were supposedly the Millwall Supporters of their time and correspondingly highly effective in the trouser-dirtying department, this is something of an omission.

Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge is that rare thing - an instant classic. Nigh-on faultlessly executed, beautifully written and enchantingly funny, it's a landmark game that really has to be seen - and heard - to be believed. If you think you don't like adventure games (like I did) then Monkey Island 2 is sure to change your mind. What can I say? I'm in love!

● David Upchurch



(Above) At last Guybrush has collected the four components with which the Voodoo Lady can make a Largo voodoo doll, seen in eye-popping action here. Unfortunately Guybrush's shameless bragging about his victory over LeChuck results in Largo getting his hands on LeChuck's living beard. Since this means that Largo can resurrect the evil pirate, this is not A Good Thing.



SOMETHING GOT ME STARTED...

It's fairly daunting being a wannabe adventure gamer these days. Not only is there a huge range of games to choose from, but there's the risk that you'll spend your thirty-odd quid and not be able past the first room.

However, neophyte adventurers thinking of purchasing Monkey Island 2 need fear not. At the start of the game there's the option to choose between the 'normal' puzzle-packed product or 'Monkey Island 2 Lite' or, as Lucasfilm Games put it, 'I've never played an adventure game before. I'm scared.' It's basically a much cut-down version of its big brother, with some puzzles already solved.

Seasoned adventurers worried that the temptation to play the easy game (and thus get hints for the main game) will be too much can rest easy. The simplified game is changed sufficiently so as not to give too much away on the harder game's solutions. Likewise, even if you've completed the Lite game, there are plenty more laughs to be had solving the tougher game. How's that for Value For Money?

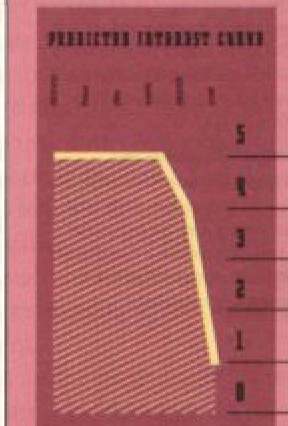
RATINGS

👍	👎
Marvellous animation and beautiful painted graphics. Stunning 'interactive' background music. Hugely entertaining and often very funny storyline.	Little sense of real 'danger'. Character close-ups don't work well.

950 AMIGA RATING

G	IQ	A	FF
9	8	10	10

Right from the start Monkey Island 2 is quite literally stunning. The beautifully detailed graphics, marvellously realised animation and an evocative musical soundtrack are the icing on the superbly-atmospheric adventure cake. Exciting, funny and involving, there's little likelihood of a decent night's sleep until the game's been cracked. Monkey Island 2 is a masterpiece of programming and game design that deserves to be in any discerning gamers software collection. How can Lucasfilm - or anyone else for that matter - possibly top it?



Genre Sports Simulation
Publisher Electronic Arts
Developer Gary Roberts
Price £25.99

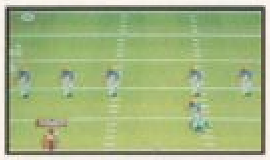
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL

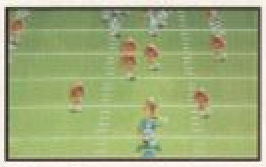
There are two types of people - those that understand American Football and those that don't. If you happen to be a member of the latter category, and don't know a First Down from a Field Goal, you're missing out a bit, I'm afraid. Alright, so at first it just looks like a bunch of blokes in fancy dress squabbling over a giant peanut. But once you've got a hang of the ground rules, American Football is one of the most exhilarating spectacles you're ever likely to see on television. The sweat, the thunder, the smell of the liniment - it's a game embedded so deeply into the American way of life that, even at college level it's a multi-million dollar business that makes our sports industry look like a game of *Subbuteo* by comparison. Now, thanks to Channel 4, it's even built up quite a following over here. Whether this is partly due to our strange subconscious desire to be like Americans I'm not sure but there can be no denying the end result - that like it or not, American Football is here to stay.

Despite our keenness to get involved, however, our experience and expertise when it comes to the great game is still a bit amateurish when compared to the Americans themselves, and so it hardly comes as a surprise that we've had to rely on them to provide the best computer interpretations - and even then it's been a bit of a dodgy bunch, with only Cinemaware's exemplary but aging *TV Sports: Football* standing out from the crowd. All the more reason then for footy fans to be getting all excited over Electronic Arts' latest effort - anyone familiar with American Football games in general or the Sega Megadrive 'scene' will know that John Madden Football comes with one of the highest pedigrees a game could have. It has, for the last year, been widely regarded as The Best Game Ever On The Megadrive, scooping rave reviews and armfuls of awards on both sides of the Atlantic - and now it's on the Amiga.

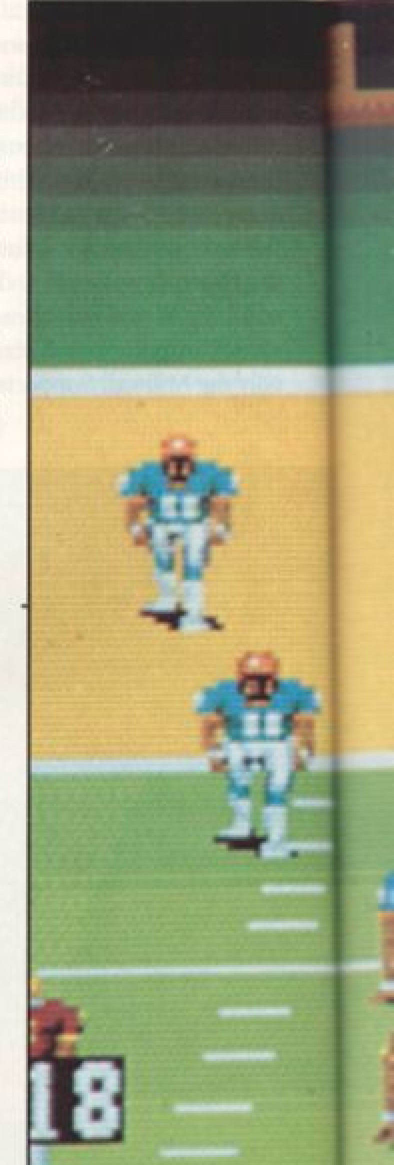
The adaptation represents something of a software landmark, as it's the first time an original console game has been converted to a computer format - treacherous territory to be sure. Nevertheless, EA's in-house coders have handled the none-too-easy task with grace and style, and the result is one of the classiest sports simulations the Amiga has seen.

Right, first things first - the rules of the game. Two teams, one ball, all on a pitch (or gridiron) a hundred yards long. Each team has an endzone, situated logically at either end of the field. The object is to move the ball up the pitch into the opposing team's endzone to score Touchdowns. Unlike Rugby, however, it's not quite as simple us just legging it up the pitch as fast as possible. The pitch is marked into individual yards (with additional markers for each group of ten - 20, 30, 40 and so on), and the attacking team's job

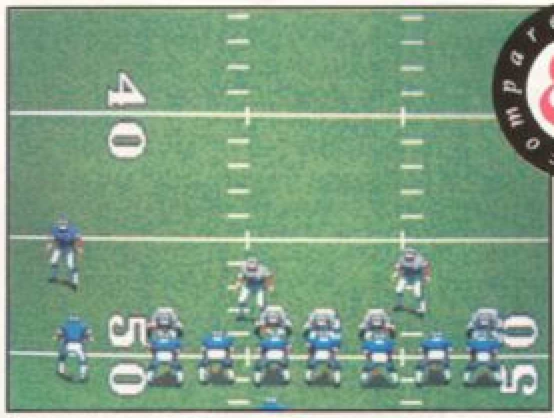


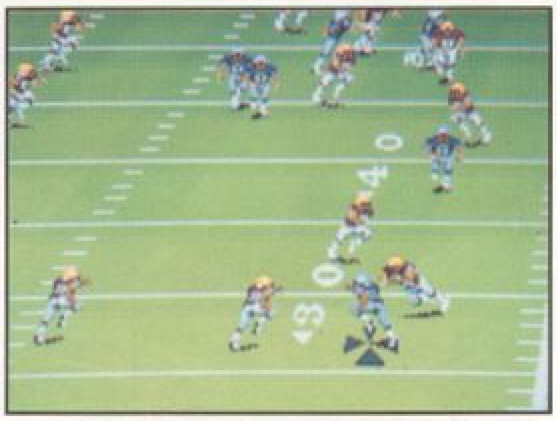


(Above) The game begins with the defending team kicking the ball as far down the pitch as possible. When an attacking player receives it (top), he then runs back up the pitch with it - the place where he is tackled is where play starts. The same procedure follows every Touchdown.



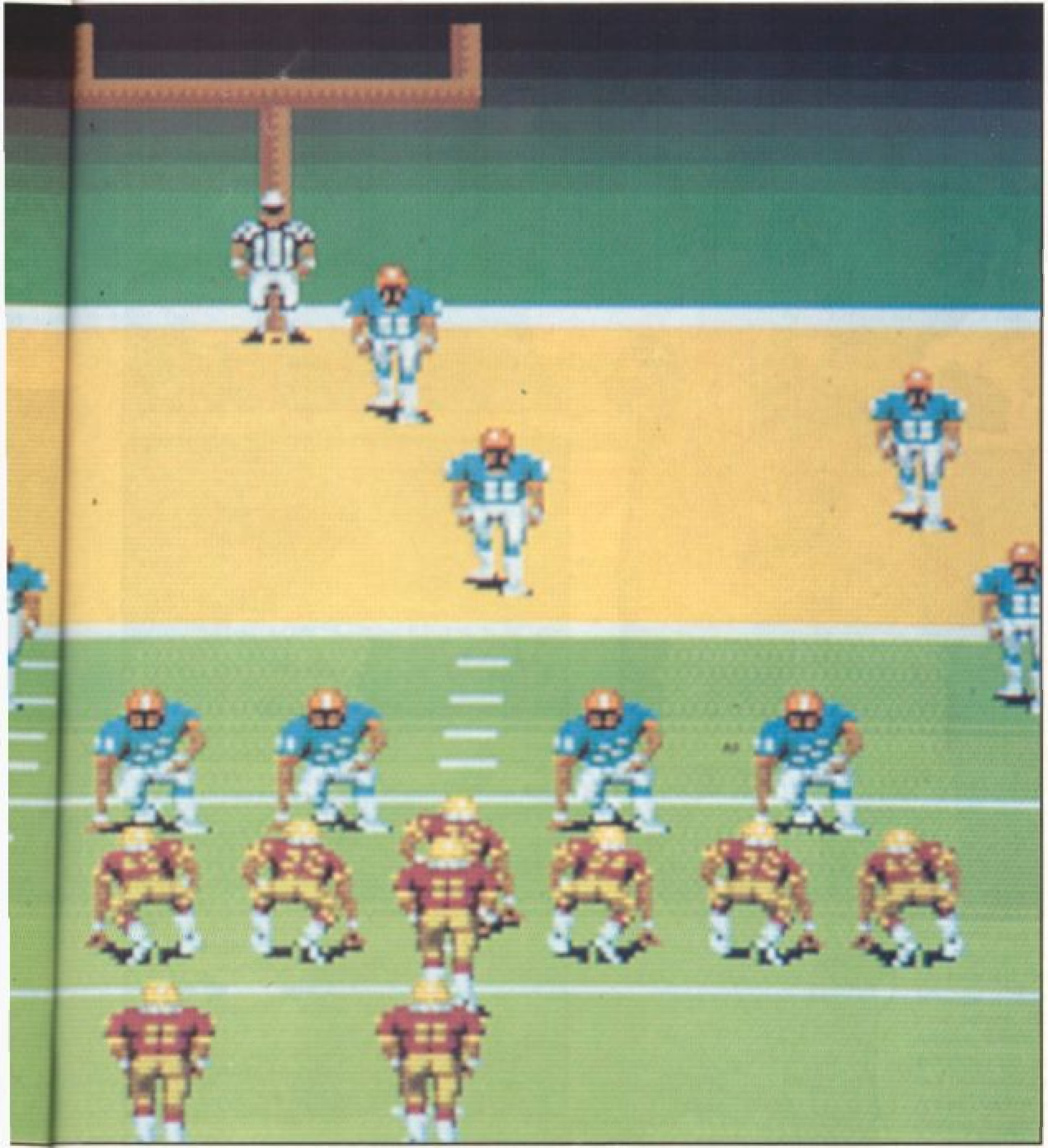
(Right) Defensive and offensive teams face off in the line of scrimmage. With the attacking side less than ten yards away from a Touchdown, the defence can't afford to make any mistakes.





compare & contrast

At first glance, John Madden Football could easily be mistaken for Cinemaware's TV Sports: Football. Graphically it's very similar indeed, with lookalike sprites and a similar playcalling system - although the pitch itself is somewhat flatter. And, would you believe, the two games play very much like each other as well! There's very little to separate John Madden from TV Sports: Football on basic gameplay grounds, but Madden's more sophisticated character control and the impressive array of options and variables that it offers make it the better bet. Madden has a classier air about it, which is most noticable during play when the impressive 3D panoramic pitch display is in full view. So, to summarise - John Madden is better. OK?



is to get the ball into the opposing team's endzone by advancing it up the pitch in a series of attacks, either by simply running with it, or throwing it to a player further up the field (called a receiver) to catch. Each attack is known as a Down, and the offense gets four Downs in which to advance the ball at least ten yards. Hence the cryptic sounding scores such as "Third and Seven" - the attacking team is on its third down with seven yards still to go. Though ten yards is the minimum distance to cover, there's no limit to how far a play may go. If an attacker manages to punch and shove his way through the defensive line, for example, he can run all the way for a Touchdown.

Meanwhile, of course, the other team is defending and trying to keep the ball as far away from its goal-line as possible. If the attacking team fails to advance the designated ten yards, the roles switch over and the other team gets a crack at scoring. And that's it in a very small nutshell. Simple? You bet. Easy? Don't be ridiculous...

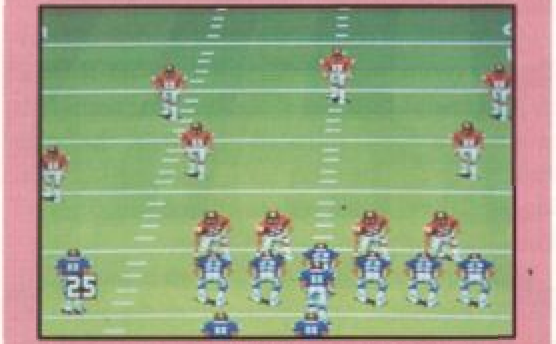
Officially, John Madden Football is part of the EASN (Electronic Arts Sports Network), although the teams that make up its league are all those found in the good old NFL. There are sixteen of them, ranging from Atlanta to San Francisco and all supposedly modelled on their real-life counterparts, along with a special all-star line-up put together by the big man Madden himself. Once the shoulder pads are in place, the player can choose to take his team into the regular season (a one-off game against the team of your choice), a Sudden Death game, where the first team to score wins, or into the big-time playoffs, advancing through the increasingly-tough heats for a chance to play in the final on Super Sunday. Players who take their footballing seriously should choose their own team carefully, and be even more wary when facing up to computer-controlled opposition in the playoffs. Teams' performances in different areas differ radically from one another - some are good at attacking in the air, while others may have fast runners that require careful marking or loopholes in defence that can be exploited. Understanding these sorts of tactics is a vital key to success in John Madden - it can be played simply as an arcade sports game, but the player won't stand a snowball's chance unless he can weigh up the factors and make intelligent playcalling decisions based on them.

EA's in-house coders have handled the none-too-easy task of converting an all-time Megadrive classic onto the Amiga with grace and style, and the result is one of the classiest sports simulations the machine has seen.

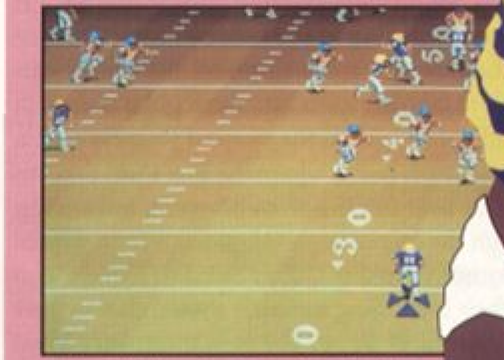
And so to the gridiron for the game itself. Unlike most sports games, John Madden Football displays the action from a viewpoint different to ▶

AND NOW, HERE'S THE WEATHER...

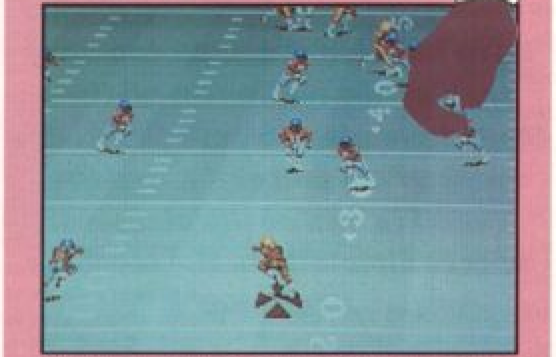
As a special bonus for Amiga owners, John Madden Football boasts a few features which never appeared in the Megadrive original. Games can now be played on real or artificial turf, indoors or outdoors and in a variety of weather conditions. After all, even in America it's not sunny every day...



Mmm-mmm... break out the cherry squishies and ice cream, 'cause the grass is cool and fresh, there's not a cloud in the sky and the sun is blazing down. Absolutely perfect conditions for a spot of sports-related physical violence.



Oh dear. It's been chucking it down the night before and the result is a sludgy, muddy pitch. The going is much tougher now, with the soft ground slowing the players down no end. There's a fair bit of sliding around, too.

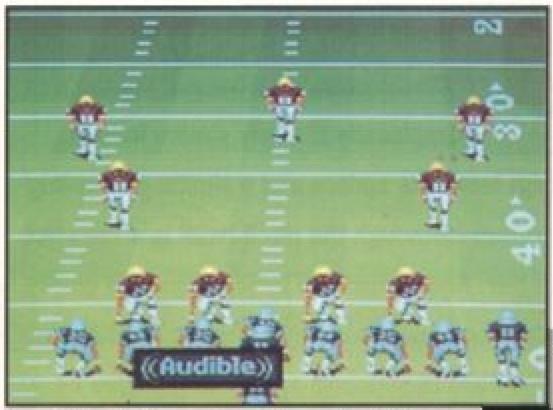


The ultimate challenge for advanced players, the snow and ice scenario makes you wonder who would be so bloody stupid as to play in arctic conditions on grass that's as hard as concrete. But play you must, with the hapless players a-slipping and a-sliding all over the place.

(Right top) Before selecting a play, the coach must choose a 'set' - the players to perform that play. When the new boys run on, they huddle together in a team talk as the play itself is decided on.

(Right middle) No, they're not parking metres - the posts on the sidelines indicate the ten yards that the team must advance for a First Down.

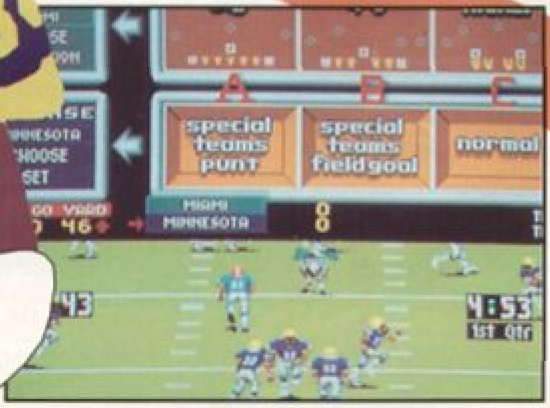
(Right bottom) Whatever happens don't get sacked with the ball in your own endzone - it's called a Safety and gives two points to the other team.

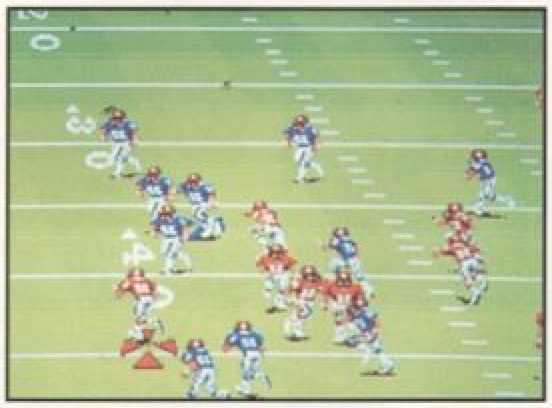


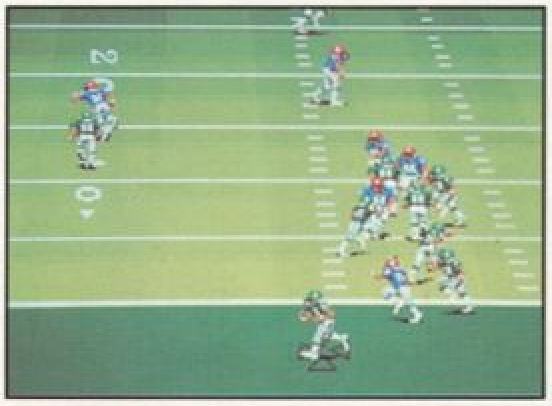
In addition to the scores of plays selectable from the menus, players can add extra wrinkles to their tactics via 'audibles' - those incomprehensible commands the quarterback shouts to his team before the ball is snapped. Every team has its own set of six special plays, with a different audible command for each.

Use the audibles to change tactics if you have any last-minute doubts after you've selected your play.

As soon as the attacking team gets within around 30 yards of the target endzone, it may like to have a crack at taking a Field Goal - particularly if the chances of getting a Touchdown look slim. As the kicker runs to the ball, the player has a couple of seconds to make crucial power and direction changes. Get it between the posts to score a lovely three points and hear the computer cry "It's Good!" A shot at goal is also taken for an extra point after each Touchdown - just like converting a try in Rugby.

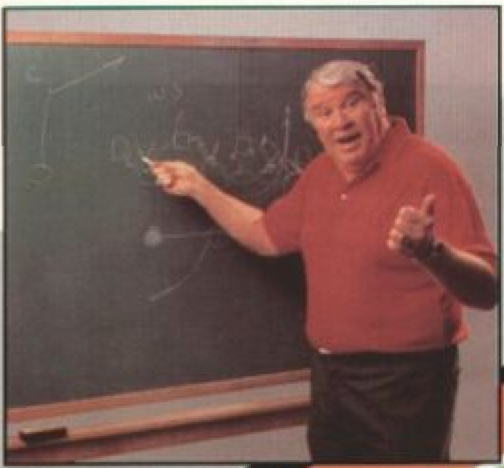






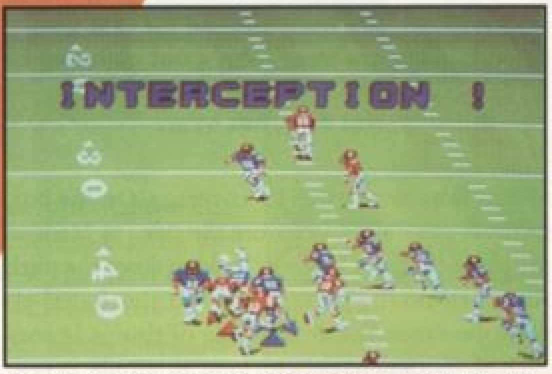
if you
ou've

und 30
a
the
of
anges.
points
t goal
down

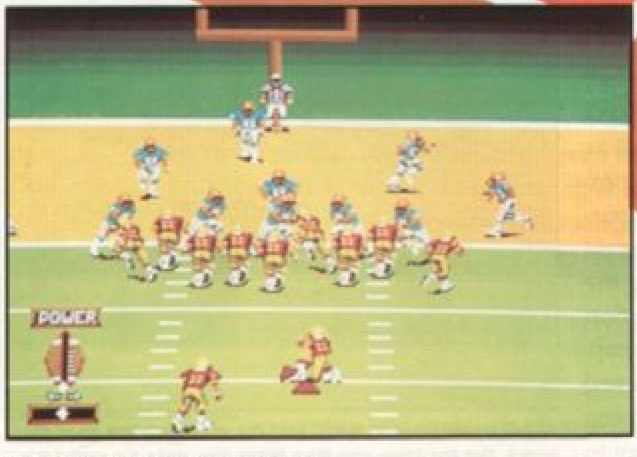


Prior to play, Coach Madden provides a scouting report on both teams, detailing strengths and weaknesses. He also turns up during the game, at half and full time, to give a plethora of useful statistics.

GIANTS
10 20 30 40 50 40 30 20 10
BEARS

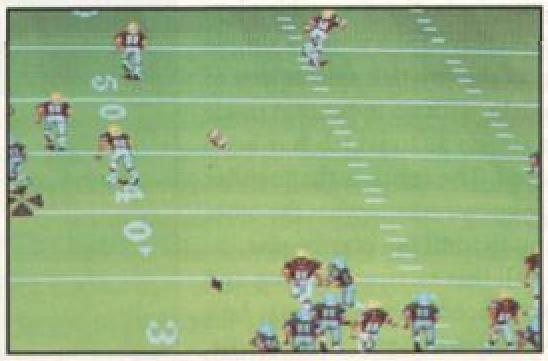


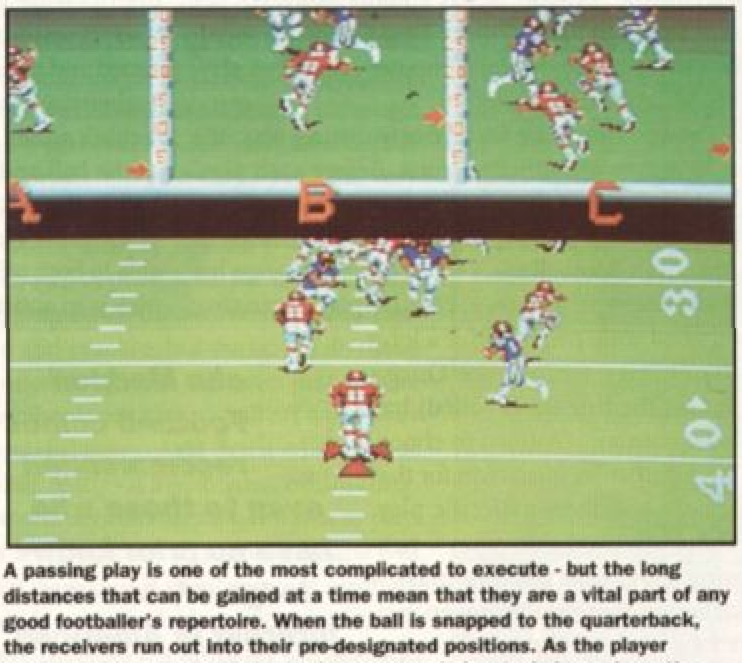
The job of a Defensive Back during a passing play is to knock the ball from the air or otherwise get in the way so that the attacking receiver can't catch the ball as it comes in. If the defending player is extra lucky and catches the ball instead of the intended receiver, an Interception is called and play switches round immediately, with the other team going on the attack with the ball. The same rule applies if a receiver fumbles the catch - a defender can run in and snatch it away before the butterfingered player gets a chance to recover it.



If the attacking team still hasn't moved ten yards by the Fouth Down, it's probably best to forget about it and use the last play to kick the ball to safety. Obviously a Field Goal is the best option, putting three points on the board, but if the range is too far for that, the quarterback can simply punt it deep into enemy territory, thereby making sure they have a lot of ground to cover on their offensive. Sneaky players may fake the kick - as the defensive line moves back in preparation for the incoming ball, the quarterback just grabs it and runs. It doesn't always work, but when it does the defence ends up with some right egg on its face.

Remember that long throws are difficult for receivers to catch - often the most effective passes are short lobs to a player just behind the defensive line.





A passing play is one of the most complicated to execute - but the long distances that can be gained at a time mean that they are a vital part of any good footballer's repertoire. When the ball is snapped to the quarterback, the receivers run out into their pre-designated positions. As the player prepares to throw, the three receivers appear in inset windows above the main screen, with their hands in the air if they are in good position to receive. With a receiver selected, the computer throws the ball automatically, and it's then up to the player to get the receiver under the ball (its landing point is indicated by a cross on the pitch) before it lands. If it's just on the edge of his reach, the receiver can jump into the air or perform a breath-taking dive to complete the catch.

Amiga version

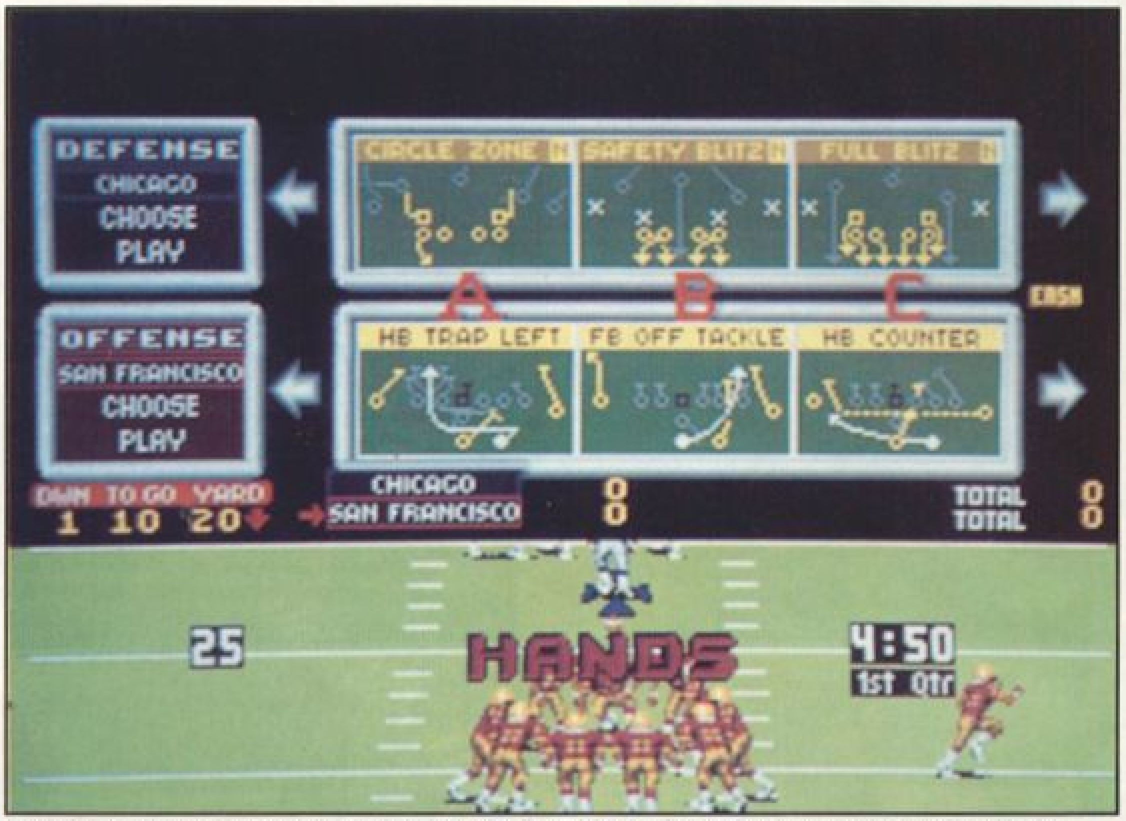
John Madden Football is superbly presented, with no end of pretty front-end screens and gorgeous graphics when out on the field - the colour graduation on the pitch works particularly well. A liberal sprinkling of sampled speech and bonecrunching effects adds to the atmosphere, and all in all what you've got is one of the classiest Amiga products in yonks. Unfortunately, half-meg owners don't get the full benefit of the sound and have to put up with a bit of multi-loading, but it's not too much of a headache.

ST version

Sorry ST fans, but EA have no plans for an Atari version.

PC version

It's hard cheese for IBM owners too - John's not planning to pay a visit to your machine. Not now, not ever.



It's bluff city as the two sides select their tactics prior to play. Each of the play diagrams is colour-coded for ease of identification - running plays are yellow, passing plays are brown. In a two-player game, it's a good idea to hide your joystick from view as you select so your opponent can't see what you're up to.

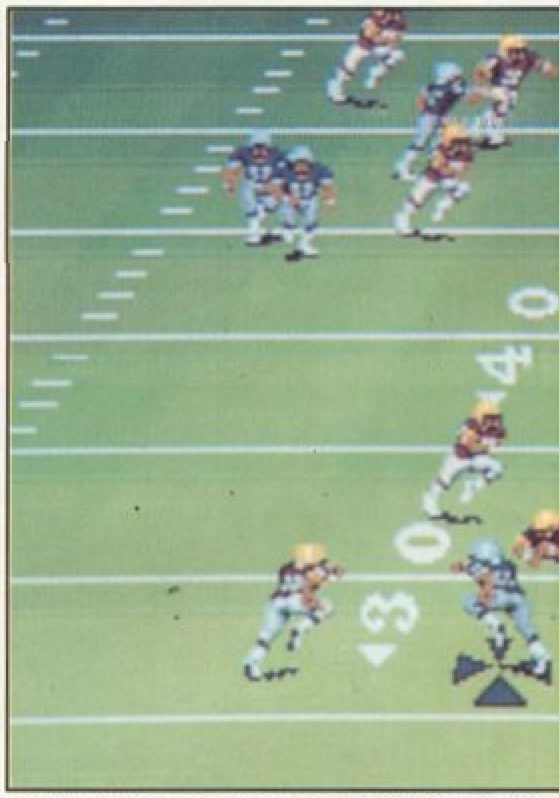
to that favoured by the TV coverage. On the box, cameras generally watch from the side - in Madden the game is played head-on, looking down the pitch from behind the players in a foreshortened 3D view. So far as the arcade side of things is concerned, matters have been kept as simple as possible. It's no *Kick Off* to be sure, but given the complexity of the sport it's simulating, John Madden does an admirable job of retaining playable arcade elements. The player only ever controls one team member at a time, while the computer takes care of the rest, guiding them in accordance with the selected play. In fact, it's possible to take hands off the joystick altogether and let the computer execute the play completely automatically! It's not half as much fun as controlling things personally, but it shows how the computer-controlled players behave intelligently.

Though the game flows freely during play, it's split into two distinct sections. Before each play, both teams pick their tactics from a comprehensive selection put together by Madden himself. American Football allows the coach to change his team line-up for each particular play - bringing on good wide receivers for a long passing play, for instance. Once a Set (as the line-up is called) has been chosen, it's down to choosing a particular formation for that line-up and then a specific play. There are two basic types – running plays and passing plays – although there are umpteen variations on those themes. The player can take big gambles, pushing his receivers far down the field and going for a long throw – the distance makes the chance of 'completing' the pass more remote, but the yardage that stands to be gained if the play comes off makes it worth the risk. Alternatively, there are short n' sweet running plays where the quarterback sneakily hands the ball to one of his runners, who then tries to run round or barge his way through the defensive line. Tactics are of course a matter of personal taste, to be tailored round a player's particular style and skills. Ambitious players may want to spend a lot of time 'in the air', passing over long distances to make big yard gains at a time, while others may prefer the slow, thoughtful approach, making short running plays that gain just a few yards at a time.

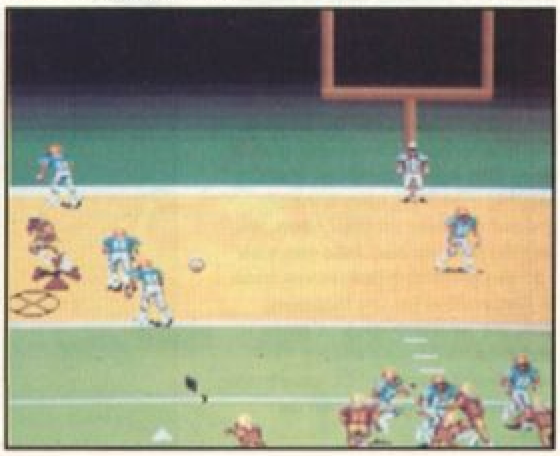
More often than not, though, advancing the ball even a couple of yards can be a much tougher task than it sounds. The defensive plays are just as varied and devious as the offensive ones, with comprehensive marking of players, blitzes at the quarterback aimed at 'sacking' him before he gets rid of the ball and even attempts at intercepting the ball in the air, thus turning the whole direction of the game around. With such varied tactics available to both offensive and defensive sides, the real trick is in anticipating what the other team is going to do and then calling a play to counter those tactics. Madden's play selection system has been designed to let this vital bluffing element work to the full. As each team selects, three possible plays are displayed at a time - a simple tap of the joystick selects one of the trio, with no indication made on screen as to which has been picked. The result is that neither side knows exactly what the other is up to until the play begins.

All this tactical bluffing and poker-faced playcalling may be a very important part of the game,

> ***John Madden Football comes recommended even to those who have no prior knowledge of, or even interest in American Football. It's probably the best and most convincing introduction to the sport there is.***



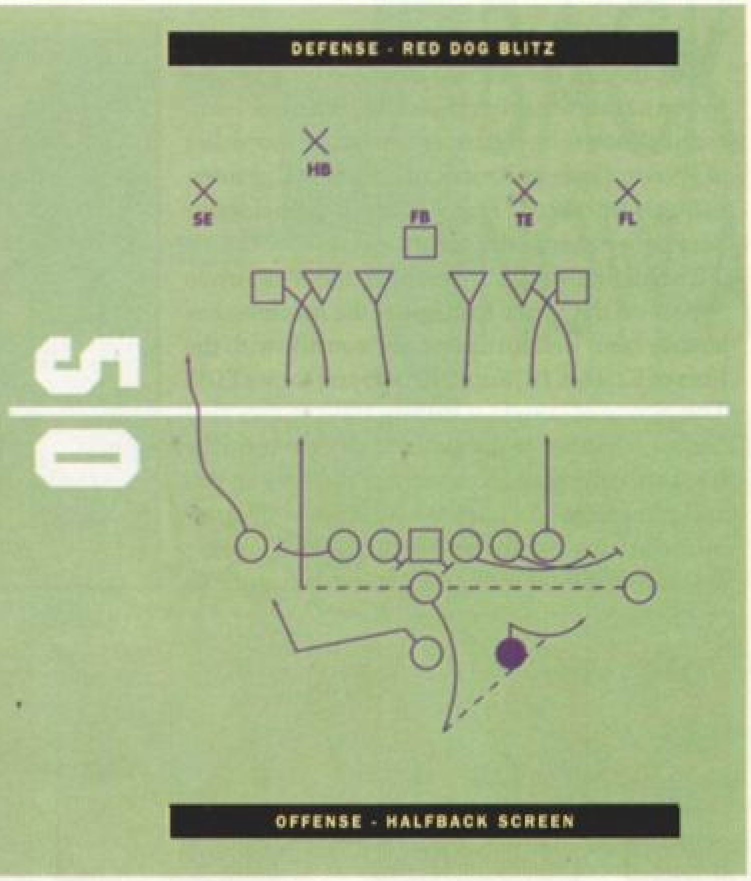
All hell breaks loose on the 25 yard line as the Dolphins go on the attack. Can the 49ers stop them before they make ten yards? It's all up to the guy with the ball now, as it can't be passed once it's crossed the scrimmage line.

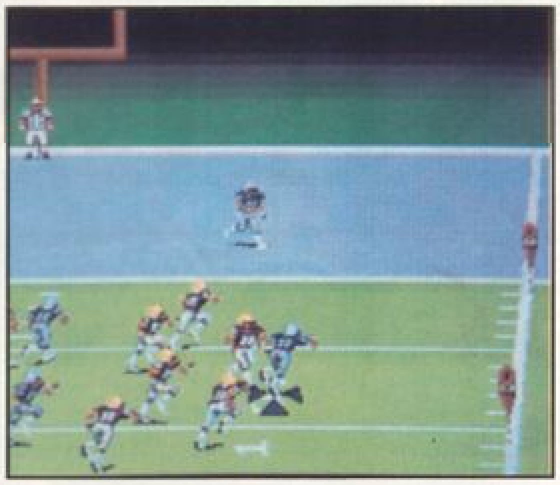


DO I HAVE TO DRAW YOU A PICTURE?

Every play in John Madden Football comes complete with a descriptive diagram, illustrating how it works. They show the intended route of the ball, paths of players and handoff/pass positions. It's vital that the terminology of these little pictures is mastered if any decent playcalling decisions are to be made. Everything is shape and colour coded, and the result is that complex information about a play can be conveyed in just a few squiggly lines, squares and circles. Each play is given a suitably hard (and confusing) name, such as 'Red Dog Blitz' (an all-out attack on the Quarterback), 'Statue of Liberty' (a long pass to a fast receiver) and 'Naked Bootleg' (a complex running play). Don't worry - it'll all make sense with practice.

●	***Ball Carrier, or Kicker***	▽	***Down Lineman***
↘	***Run Fake***	□	***Linebacker***
---	***Motion, Pitchout, or Pass***	×	***Defensive Back***
⚲	***Run Block***	▽	***Read***
♀	***Pass Block***	▽	***Pass Rush***
♂	***Pass Route***	×	***Cover Opponent Man-to-Man***
⊙⊙⊙	***Eligible receivers***	×	***Route to follow to move into zone***





(above right) Another Touchdown attempt, this time as a New York Giants player breaks away from the defence and makes a run for the goal-line. But can he shake off those fleet-footed linebackers?

(left) Is it going to be a Touchdown? The pass is coming in hard, fast and on target, but the receiver has to make it to the crosshair before the ball does if he's going to catch it. With seven points at stake, a daring dive may be in order...

but equally as vital - and even more fun - is the arcade side of things, which comes into play as soon as the ball goes on the move. Madden's control mode is understandably complex (remember it originally worked on a three-button Megadrive joypad) but works instinctively, allowing the on-screen players to perform graceful, athletic moves with the minimum of fuss. Aside from the usual running and tackling, players can pull off jinxy little spins to avoid tackles, dive for that vital extra yard, jump to catch the ball and get an extra burst of speed when it's needed. The players' versatility, combined with the fluid animation of the characters, makes for some very impressive, almost televisual set-pieces. All this adds tremendously to the game's overall feel and atmosphere, and there's genuine tension and excitement to be had when the scores are oh-so close and the two minute warning sounds. There's a particular sense of whooping satisfaction when an elaborate play comes off just as you planned it, especially if it results in a Touchdown - the scoring player performs a quick breakdance in time with the congratulatory music to signify his contentment.

Probably the nicest thing about John Madden Football is that players with no prior knowledge of the sport need not fear - indeed, playing the game is probably the quickest and most effective way to get acquainted with how the sport works. With so many complex rules, plays and formations, it's often difficult to understand what's going on even when watching live on TV. Madden's uncluttered display, which has been set at just the right angle and point of view to provide maximum visibility, neatly oversteps the problem of visual complexity without simplifying or diminishing detail.

But is John Madden Football a Sports Game or Sports Simulation? Hmmm, that's a thorny one, and no mistake. Well, if anything it's a bit of both. The game's skillful combination of instinctive arcade action and involved strategic playcalling means that it works well at all levels, although anyone who's just looking for, say, *Kick Off* for American Football had best stay away. The very nature of the sport means that a straight arcade implementation simply couldn't work - but Madden manages to provide all the tactical depth without bogging down the arcade side of things. It takes time and practice, but the tactics do make sense and once the player has even just a basic grasp of how they work he can pull off some very smart, successful plays. And that's what makes it so enjoyable, really - it's involving, exhilirating, instinctive and it pays out very big rewards to players who get it right. American Football fans will of course lap it up, but it comes just as strongly recommended to those who have no prior knowledge, or even interest - it's probably the best and most convincing introduction to the sport there is. Oh, and the most playable sports game of the year as well. Nearly forgot that bit.

● **Gary Whitta**

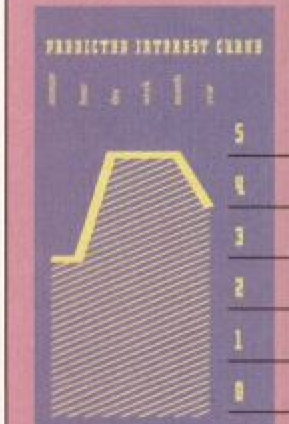
RATINGS

Excellent graphical presentation.	A little sluggish and 'dream-like'.
Fine mix of tactical playcalling and arcade action.	Maybe too tough for less patient gamers.
Superb speech and FX.	

925 AMIGA RATING

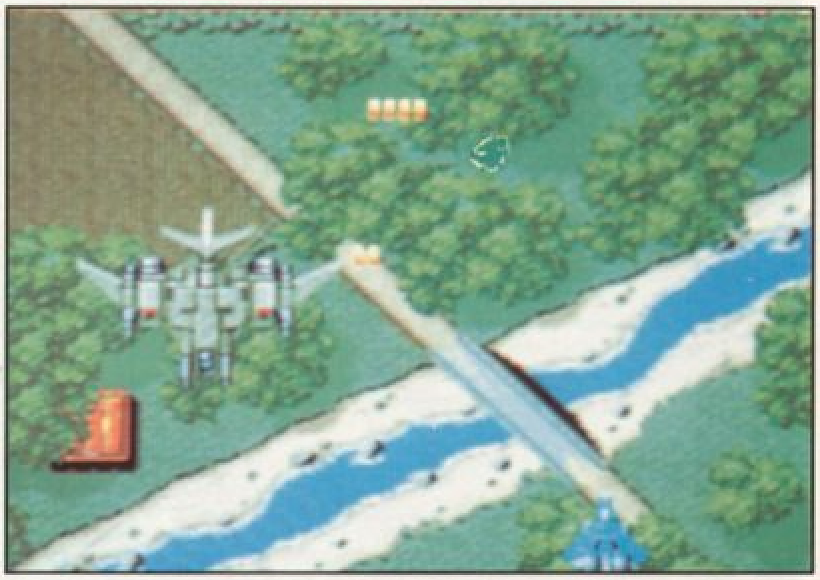
G	IQ	A	FF
8	6	8	9

Initially, John Madden Football can be a very frustrating affair. Nothing ever seems to go right - the defence sacks you every time, and there's nothing you can do against the steamroller-like attacks of the enemy. But once you learn how the plays work and start making proper decisions the fun soon kicks in. From then on the game grows with the player, becoming naturally more complex and involving as he gets better, trying more ambitious plays and developing new tactics. The game's apparent slowness may put off players who expect a non-stop rollercoaster ride - but anyone who knows American Football understands that that's just not the nature of the sport. Considering the lack of any high-speed action, the game gets a fair amount of adrenalin pumping. The playoffs provide extra long-term appeal, although an even longer-lasting option, such as a full league, wouldn't have gone amiss. Nevertheless, the football action remains addictive and offers enough new surprises to keep you playing well into the next season.



JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL RATINGS

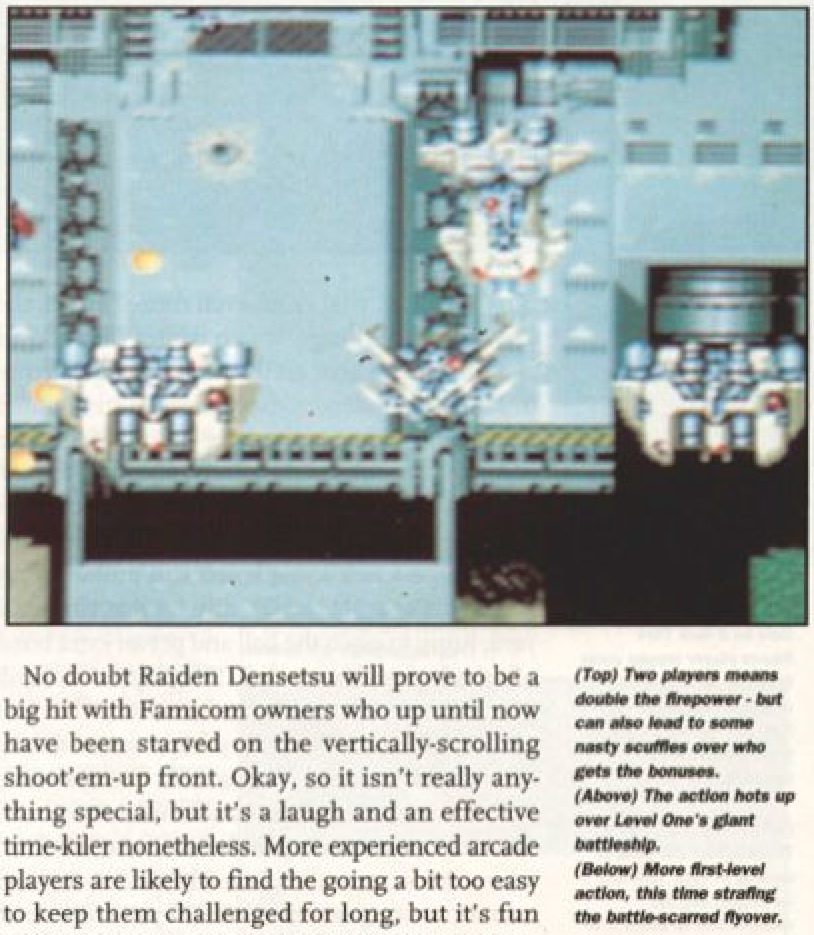
RAIDEN DENSETSU



What a rock hard name for a game! Actually, though the original Japanese version goes by the name of Raiden Densetsu, it's more commonly known by the more mundane monicker of Raiden Trad - its American title. Isn't that interesting? No? Well, that's quite a coincidence because neither is the game.

It's the first vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up to appear on the Super Famicom - the machine has already been well furnished horizontally with the likes of Gradius III, Super R-Type and Super EDF. The plot is of course a trifling little matter that has no relevance to the game at all - but for what it's worth, the practical upshot of it all is that you and an optional pal have to take off in your state-of-the-art spaceships and kick as much enemy ass as possible. It's all pretty formulaic stuff, so much so that at times it seems a bit like a trip down memory lane - during the time spent playing it, the game brought to mind memories of about a dozen other shoot'em-ups, including Slap Fight, Flying Shark, Sidewinder, Xevious and several others. Great, you may say, shades of all those classic blasters all in one tasty package! Yes, well unfortunately it's not quite like that. While there are definite similarities between Raiden Densetsu and elements of the aforementioned games, it doesn't pack the same kind of punch that made those games the classics they are.

Split into stages with a bad guy at the end of each, Raiden Densetsu takes the player through a variety of earthly backdrops - burned out cities, forests, oceans and the like, before venturing out into deep space. The enemies remain pretty much consistent throughout - along the way the player encounter the obligatory predictable waves of fighters, trundling tanks and the occasional big boy that needs to be pumped full of shells before it explodes. I know, I know, not exactly groundbreaking, is it? It's not all bad, though - the game is very generous with the extra weapons and power-ups (most waves and large enemies release one when destroyed), and they're actually quite good. The laser beams and homing missiles are the best of the bunch, and with two players powered-up at the same time, things can get very busy indeed. The only real let-down is the smart bomb - it produces a rather pathetic red cloud that looks so unconvincing that it's difficult to imagine that it could actually do any damage.



No doubt Raiden Densetsu will prove to be a big hit with Famicom owners who up until now have been starved on the vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up front. Okay, so it isn't really anything special, but it's a laugh and an effective time-kiler nonetheless. More experienced arcade players are likely to find the going a bit too easy to keep them challenged for long, but it's fun while it lasts, particularly in two-player mode. Hopefully, however, we'll be seeing some considerably more accomplished attempts at this genre in the not-too-distant future.

● **Gary Whitta**

(Top) Two players means double the firepower - but can also lead to some nasty scuffles over who gets the bonuses.
(Above) The action hots up over Level One's giant battleship.
(Below) More first-level action, this time strafing the battle-scarred flyover.

PRICE
£49·99
(Import)

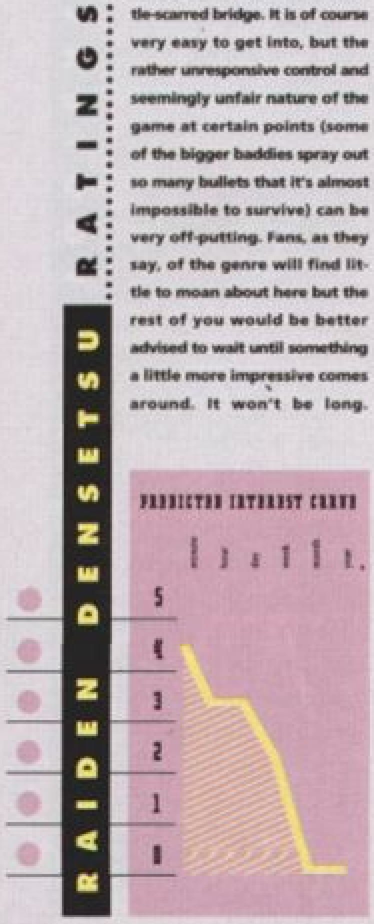
👍	👎
Reasonably playable. Gets better as you go on.	Repetetive, ultimately unchallenging. Unispiring graphics and sound.

FAMICOM RATING 670

G	IQ	A	FF
6	3	6	6

RAIDEN DENSETSU RATINGS

The Famicom has developed a nasty habit of slowing down when the going gets tough in certain shoot'em-ups - and Raiden Densetsu is no exception. Mostly, however, things progress at an acceptable pace and though the grpahics don't stand out in general, there are a few nice moments, like when the player flies over a giant battle-scarred bridge. It is of course very easy to get into, but the rather unresponsive control and seemingly unfair nature of the game at certain points (some of the bigger baddies spray out so many bullets that it's almost impossible to survive) can be very off-putting. Fans, as they say, of the genre will find little to moan about here but the rest of you would be better advised to wait until something a little more impressive comes around. It won't be long.



ACE

BACK ISSUES NOW AVAILABLE

JAN: GUNSHIP 2000

FEB: LITTIL DIVIL

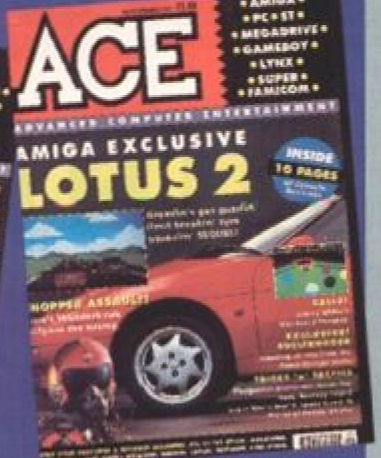
MAR: RISE OF THE DRAGON

APR SOLD OUT!

MAY SOLD OUT!

JUN: FALCON III

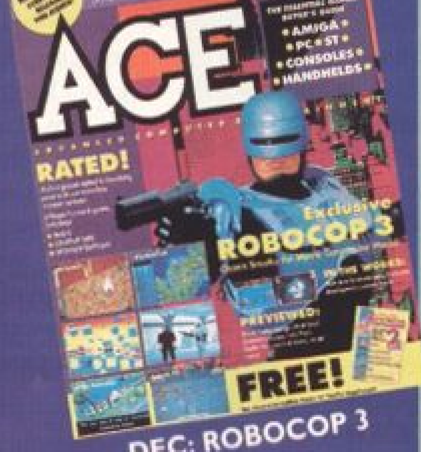
AUG: TERMINATOR 2


SEP: LOTUS 2

JUL SOLD OUT!

OCT SOLD OUT!

NOV: ALIENS 3


DEC: ROBOCOP 3

ACE is the most authoritative and creative magazine covering the Amiga, ST, PC, consoles and hand-helds. Only ACE gives you the hottest computer entertainment news of today and the games technology of tomorrow.

Now we can offer you back issues for only £2.50 (including postage and packing).

If you have missed out on any of the comprehensive In The Works features, with their exclusive insight into games development or the brilliant ACE Special Features, covering all exciting developments in entertainment technology - now's your chance to catch up!

Keep your collection of ACE, the essential games buyer's guide, up to date with our back issues service.

Simply complete the coupon below and post it to ACE Back Issues, P.O. Box 500, Leicester LE99 0AA, enclosing a postal order or cheque (made payable to EMAP Consumer Magazines) for the correct amount.

TO : ACE BACK ISSUES, PO BOX 500, LEICESTER LE99 0AA

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

____

____

__________ Post Code __________

I would like the following issue(s) of ACE

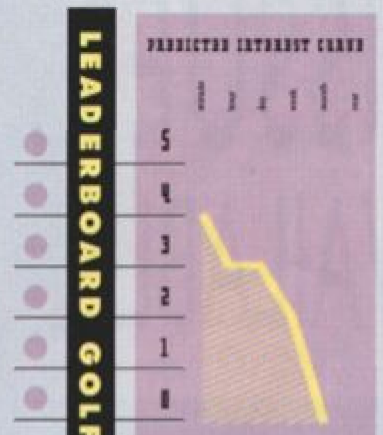
____

____

I enclose a postal order/cheque (made payable to Emap Consumer Magazines) for __________

Fulfilment : Alan Wells International, Memberline House, Farndon Road, Market Harborough, Leicester LE16 9NR

LEADERBOARD GOLF RATINGS

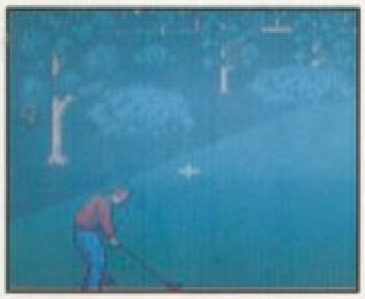


Set on its easiest level, Leaderboard is very forgiving and as such is easy to pick up and play almost immediately. Unfortunately, the shortcomings of the control system soon start to annoy. Practice and patience will eventually allow the player to overcome these obstacles, but is that something you really want to have to do? Also, because of the small display, it's difficult to judge distances and the shape of the course. Ultimately rewarding for those who are willing to persevere, but a bit of an annoying experience for anyone else.

G	IQ	A	FF
8	4	5	7

GAMEGEAR RATING **765**

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD GOLF



Anyone with even a passing familiarity with US Gold's aging golf classic Leaderboard will instantly recognise the screenshots here - if you can make them out, that is. This Sega offering is effectively a straight portover from the more recent - and more sophisticated - World Class edition. Though it's not the first Golf game on the machine (*Super Golf* claimed that title back in August), it's the first to have a serious crack at simulating the sport, as opposed to *Super*'s simplistic mini-golf antics.

GameGear golfers get to play a round over binary reconstructions of four famous courses around the world - although in practice, one course looks much like another, and the real gameplay variety is provided by a three-way difficulty setting, which adds complicating factors like hook and slice and wind conditions, thus making for more interesting play.

To its credit, World Class Leaderboard on the GameGear is virtually identical to the original computer versions - no features have been lost or simplified in this handheld translation. The courses come complete with bunkers and lakes, while players can practice on the independent driving range or putting green. There are even a few extra features, such as snatches of digitised speech which accompany certain shots.

The only problem with the game, it would seem, is the rather dodgy control method. Because the power/swerve bar, which controls the shots, is so small, it's very difficult to hit the ball accurately, and for some reason putting is a ridiculously hit-and-miss affair, particularly over short distances. As a result, what might have easily been one of the best GameGear products to date comes across as simply above average.

● Gary Whitta

PRICE
£24.99
(Out Now)

Nice speech.

Pleasing use of colour.

Comparatively fast 3D update

Annoying gameplay oversights

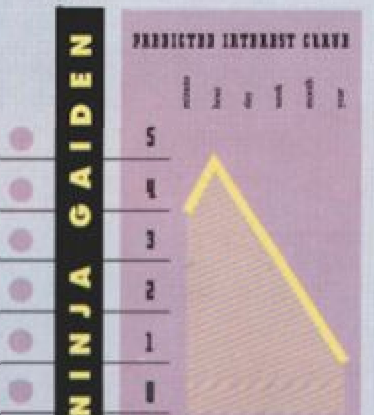
Graphics too small to accurately judge shots.

NINJA GAIDEN RATINGS

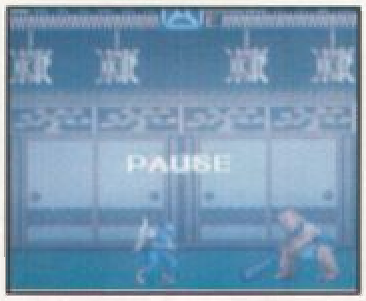
GAMEGEAR RATING **800**

G	IQ	A	FF
8	2	6	8

Alright, so it's not going to keep you playing for weeks on end, but it's a perfectly decent ruckin' romp nonetheless. Even on the GameGear's tiny screen, the figures are animated well enough to have some character, and the scores and so on are presented clearly, which is a bit of a rarity on the 'Gear. Hardly worth saving up for, but a decent post-Christmas investment that will keep you going well into February.



NINJA GAIDEN



Nice to see that the handheld revolution is leading us into incredible new vistas of original gaming excitement. Having already done the rounds on every format imaginable, Ninja Gaiden (four year old dodderer that it is) finally arrives on the GameGear. And it's not that bad. Although relatively short of fighting variety - the player has a single sword slash at his disposal - and graphically spartan, Ninja Gaiden is still a roistering beat-'em-up of the highest order.

Progressing through a bunch of levels, our lone Ninja must gradually work his way through increasingly heavily populated enemy zones, slashing away at the bad guys and doing battle with the end-of-level monsters. Pretty samey sounding stuff, agreed, but Ninja Gaiden seems to have something quite special in its nature; the difficulty is pitched just about right and the combat, although simple, is entertaining enough.

As well as the aforementioned sword, the player has a number of other weapons available for use, each of which can be collected en route. Throwing stars, three-way fire and even a protective spinning shield of energy are all employed (assuming the player has enough Force points) by crouching down and hitting Fire. But such luxuries must generally be saved for doing away with the end monsters, since they're so tough.

Further points in Ninja Gaiden's favour are that - for once - some actual imagination has gone into the design of the bad guys, and a password system allows access to later levels without slogging through previously conquered stages. Good.

● Jim Douglas

PRICE
£24.99
(Import)

Decent graphics.

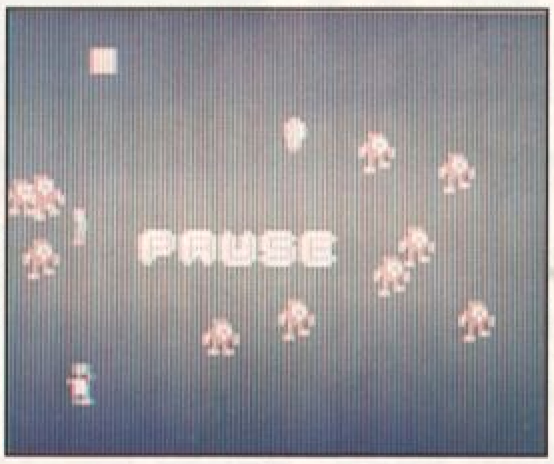
Rapid action.

Password feature.

A bit easy.

Not much innovation.

ROBOTRON 2084



PRICE
£34·99
(Out Now)

Finger-twitchingly addictive. Brilliant sound effects. Loads of attack and bonus waves. Five difficulty levels.	Graphical equivalent of Cro Magnon man. Very hard to beat. Some may find the relentless blasting boring.

Doh! Those ker-razy scientists have cocked up again! However, here the consequences of the Tefal heads' meddling are rather more serious than the usual slip-ups, like Pot Noodles or shell suits. In their quest for the ultimate robot they created the Robotrons, who promptly decided that mankind was redundant and must therefore be terminated with extreme prejudice. It's up to - gulp! - you to save the race!

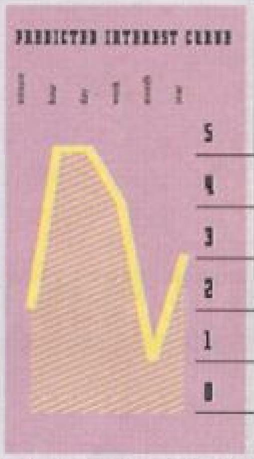
A conversion of the classic Williams' coin-op, Robotron: 2084 is shoot-'em-up action at its most addictive basic. The battle takes place in a rectangular arena sprinkled with landmines. The basic aim is to clear the screen of all Robotrons and progress to the next level. Humans can be rescued (by touching them) for a hefty bonus. On his adventures the player will encounter various Robotrons, such as cannon-fodder Grunts, indestructible Hulks and missile-spewing Enforcers.

Robotron: 2084 looks abysmal and the gameplay amounts to little more than running around endlessly shooting things, but I love it. The game's simplicity is its strong point and puts it in the *Defender* class of games where the playing is everything. Also, as with almost every Williams' game, the sound effects are superb - Robotron: 2084 is best enjoyed with ear phones in and the volume right up.

So, play it loud and say it proud, Robotron: 2084 is the best all-out blast on the Lynx yet, and shouldn't missed. Okay, okay, so you might complain that you didn't spend eighty quid on a state-of-the-art colour handheld to play a game from the dawn of computer entertainment, but then you'd probably be the sort of person who believes in 'colourising' classic B&W films. So there.

● David Upchurch

ROBOTRON 2084 RATINGS



Looks pig ugly, but sounds and plays like a dream. It's not the most varied game in the world, either in gameplay or graphics, but the gradually escalating chaos provides a surprisingly *high level of addiction.* And the challenge of doing better next time means this is a game you'll come back to time and again. Essentially Robotron: 2084 was a dry run for *Smash TV*, and if you liked that then you'll enjoy this too.

G	IQ	A	FF
4	1	9	9

837 LYNX RATING

S.T.U.N. RUNNER

Special thanks to Shekhana Consoles (081 889 9412) for the loan of these review cartridges.

PRICE
£34·99
(Out Now)

Faster than a speeding bullet. Classy graphics. Good speech.	All show, no substance.

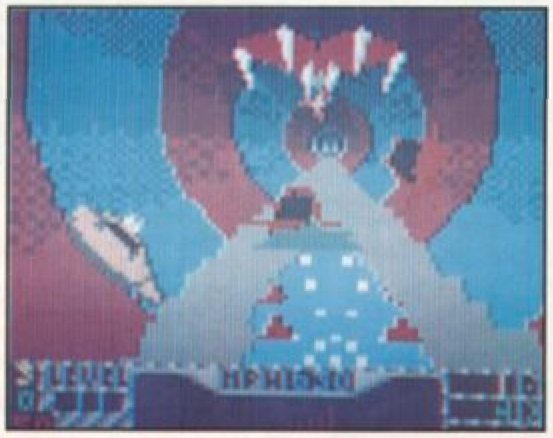
Back when S.T.U.N. Runner made its arcade debut, everyone praised its graphics but lamented the lack of anything to actually *do*. Whizzing around twisty-turny tunnels in the 25th Century equivalent of a bobsled, avoiding obstacles and collecting bonuses, was all mildly exhilarating, but one go was more than enough. Once you'd had your quid's worth the urge to flip another sov in the slot was conspicuously lacking.

When Domark snapped up the home licence everyone knew it was going to be a load of rubbish. Not, I hasten to add, due to any lack of faith in the Doms' competence to do a good job (in fact, it was a better conversion than anyone could hope for), but simply because there was no way that the Amiga or ST could even begin to emulate the lightning-fast image update of the coin-op. And without the sensation of speed, there was precious little else to hold your attention.

So if the 16-bit monsters couldn't pull off a decent conversion, what hope for the humble Lynx colour handheld? Lots, as it turns out. Atari's coders have used the Lynx's sprite-scaling hardware to the full to produce a near perfect conversion, reproducing all the speed (lots) and thrills (few) of the original. S.T.U.N. Runner was custom made for the reviewing cliché "If you liked the coin-op, you'll love this". If you didn't (and I suspect there were lots of you), stay well clear.

Oh, and there's a nice 'free' value-adding poster thrown in, too.

● David Upchurch

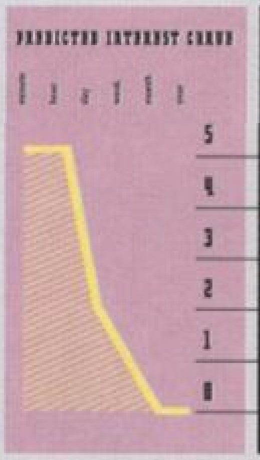


630 LYNX RATING

G	IQ	A	FF
10	2	7	5

Technically S.T.U.N. Runner is a 'stunning' achievement. Apart from a slightly chunkier look and a more restricted colour palette, this is as close a conversion as you could ever wish for. Most of the digitised speech is there too (albeit crackly). However looks, as they say, aren't everything. Once the initial glamour has worn off, there's little left to recommend it. But if you get the opportunity, do take a look at it in the shop, if only to get an idea of what the Lynx can *really* do.

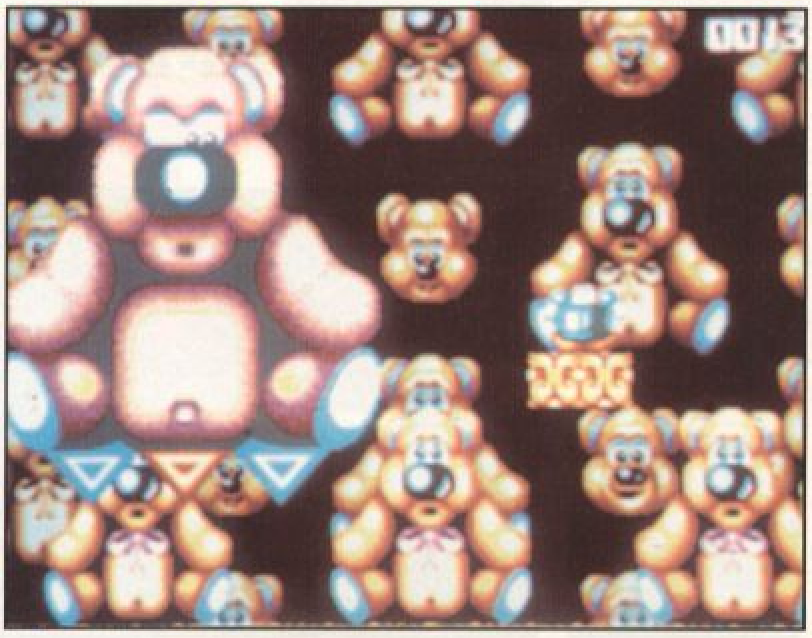
S.T.U.N. RUNNER RATINGS



What!? Megadrive Robocod given a full page! But it was only a couple of months ago that we gave the Amiga version a whopping great six pages of coverage. Surely this is really Reviews Directory update material? Well, strictly speaking yes - but Megadrive Robocod really does deserve special treatment. And you've probably guessed why already. Yup, this is it, folks - Robocod is The Best Platform Game On The Megadrive Ever. And that's official.

I know, I know - I seem to make that statement every month. (Last month I seem to remember making similarly lofty claims for *Quackshot*). But this time I really mean it.

No, really, I do. Actually, it'd be very easy to start getting very soppy over Robocod, and start sending it bunches of flowers and boxes of chocolates and declaring your undying lover for it. It's that good.



ROBOCOD

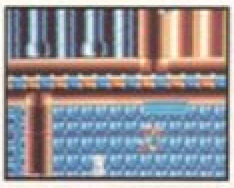
The plot is typically cute/twee/nauseating (delete as applicable to your personality type). Far away in the icy wastes of the Arctic, the foul Dr Maybe has taken control of Santa's toy factory, with the intention of blowing it to smithereens using deadly exploding penguins. As Robocod, the half-fish, the half-machine crime fighter, the player has to enter the now-trap filled factory warehouses, deactivate the penguins and, if possible, Dr Maybe too.

The basic gameplay is nothing you haven't seen before - especially if you're even halfway familiar with *Mario*. Basically it all entails lots of running about, avoiding spikes, riding platforms and so forth, while bopping the baddies on the head with a well-aimed jump and collecting bonus goodies. That said, there are a couple of innovations - Robocod can extend his top-half infinitely to reach lofty goodies or cling onto ledges and monkey swing out of danger.

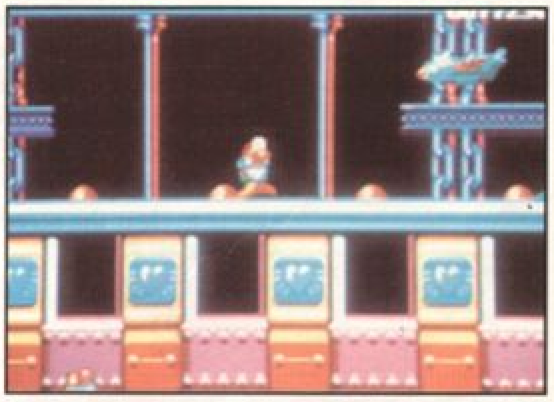
In fact, it's pretty much identical to the Amiga version, albeit faster, smoother and more colourful. The increased smoothness does make the game more enjoyable to play, but the highly-detailed parallax backdrops, while very pretty, can make it difficult to pick out the tiny bonuses. The only downer is that for some reason the Amiga's jaunty n' jolly tunes have become a little grating in the port over.

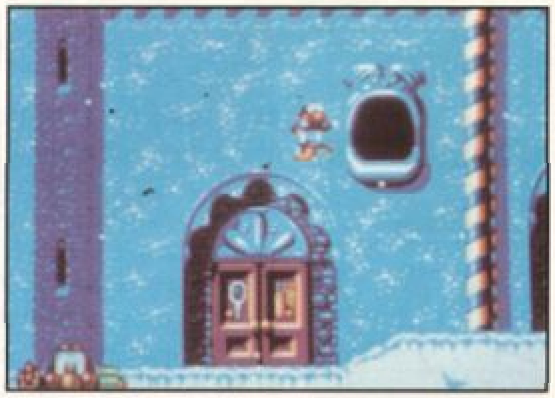
Robocod is the only platform game I've seen on any format that really gives *Mario* a run for his money. In terms of playability and gameplay variety it's almost as good - the biggest disappointment is that Robocod's designers didn't take a leaf out of *Mario*'s book and provide the player with some form of save game facility.

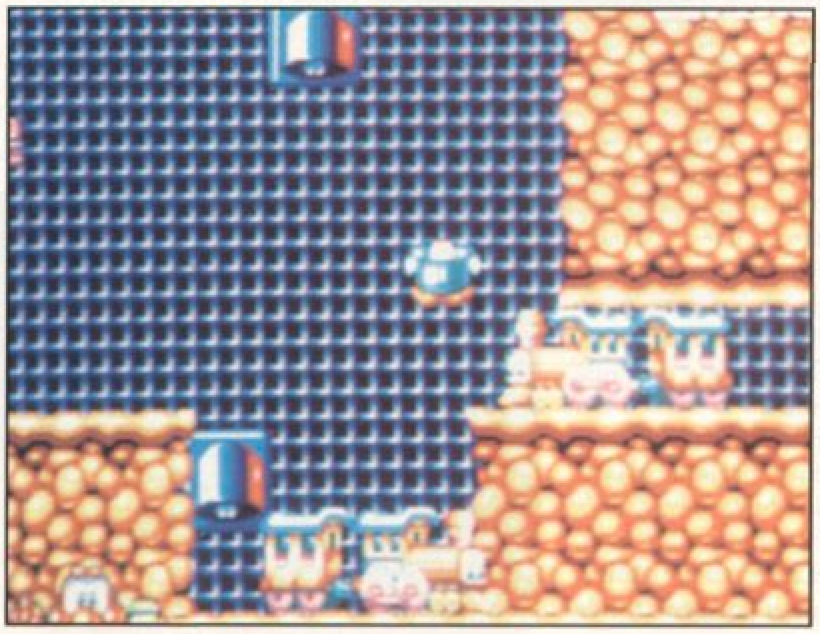
● **David Upchurch**



As this selection of shots shows the gameplay in Robocod is pretty much identical to that of the Amiga version reviewed in-depth in ACE issue 51. However, there have been big improvements in the graphics - the parallax backdrops are now full colour and highly detailed, which although attractive can make it tough to pick out the bonus goodies. Strangely, the tunes - although thematically identical - have become strangely grating in the process of conversion (not that you can tell that from these pictures, of course).







ELECTRONIC ARTS

£34·99

Out Now

Seemingly infinite gameplay variety.

Unbelievable playability.

Stacks of secret rooms and bonuses to discover.

Detailed graphics can make it hard to see bonuses.

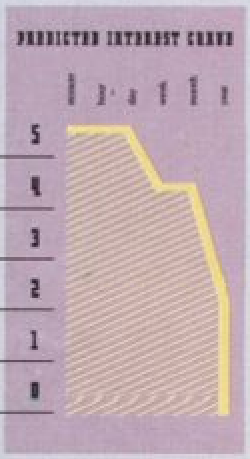
Lack of password system annoying.

MEGADRIVE RATING 938

G	IQ	A	FF
9	3	8	10

Looks superb, sounds great and plays like a platform gamer's dream. Add the fact that the gameplay constantly throws out new challenges and surprises for the player to cope with and you have the definitive Megadrive platform game. A winner - and it's British too. Hurrah! (Cue 'Land of Hope and Glory' and lots of waving of Union Jacks).

ROBOCOD RATINGS



100% MEGADRIVE

THE BEST ADD ON MONEY CAN BUY FOR YOUR MEGA DRIVE IS HERE!

The definitive complete games guide with every title individually reviewed & rated.

- **More Power packed Megadrive info than all other "so called" Sega Mags put together**
- **Over 100 Essential games reviewed in full colour**
- **The Latest MegaCD Rom news revealed**
- **Exclusive hot news in Britains' first Megadrive only Monthly Mag!**

Every thing you wanted to know about the Megadrive PLUS superb playing guides to the greatest Megadrive games.

ALL THIS AND MORE IN THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO MEGADRIVE AT ONLY £2.95!

GET THE LATEST AND THE GREATEST CONSOLE GUIDE IN THE SERIES!!

DISPLAY UNTIL 19th Dec. 1991
ONLY £2.95
•THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO•
MEGADRIVE
•THE ULTIMATE GAME BUYER'S GUIDE•
132 PAGES OVER 100 GAMES REVIEWED IN FULL COLOUR!
PLUS
BUYING A MEGADRIVE IMPORT OR OFFICIAL?
MEGADRIVE CD-ROM REVEALED!
ESSENTIAL MEGADRIVE ADD-ONS!
PREVIEWS GALORE!
MERCS

Available in all good Newsagents now!!

But if you live near bad newsagents, you can order one direct from us by filling out the coupon below and sending it to: Complete guide to Megadrive, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC13AU.

OOOH! QUICK! Send me a copy of the complete guide to MEGADRIVE because I'm really desperate! I enclose a cheque/postal order for £3.45 (£2.95 + 50 p post and packing) made payable to Mean Machines. Overseas orders send £5.00 cash (UK Sterling only)

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

____

____

____

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92

PRICE
£39·99
ELECTRONIC ARTS
OUT NOW

Tremendously playable.

Exemplary graphic presentation.

Atmospheric sounds.

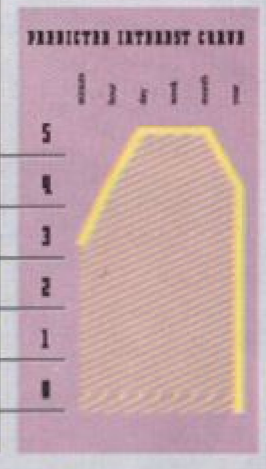
Well... nothing springs to mind.

MEGADRIVE RATING 920

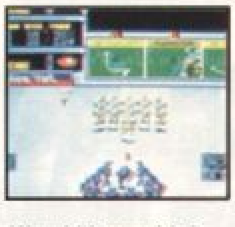
8 5 8 9

JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92 RATINGS

Though John Madden 92 boasts graphics that are only marginally superior to the original, the super-fast 3D and nippy animation on the players makes it almost engaging to watch as it is to play. Sonically, the Megadrive has been done proud, with a snappy score and no end of classy sampled speech and FX courtesy of Rob Hubbard - they do quite a job of heightening the atmosphere. Interest-wise, inexperienced players will find that the game's super-friendly nature will allow them to get into the swing of things quickly and easily, and once in, the multitude of plays and game options ensures that boredom is a very long-distance prospect. You're not likely to chuck this one away in a hurry - at least not until John Madden 93 comes along.



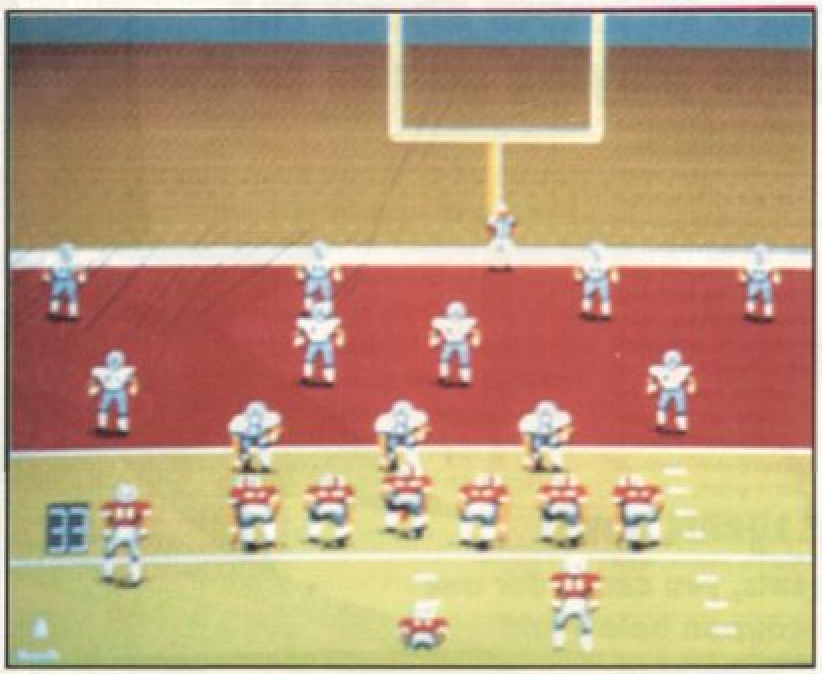
It's a bit like buses, isn't it? After John Madden's ultra-successful Megadrive outing last year, we don't hear another peep out of him for ages and then TWO games come along in the same month. Not only do we get the excellent Amiga adaptation (see page 68), but also the official Megadrive sequel! Actually, John Madden '92 isn't quite a fully-blown sequel - it's more a greatly enhanced and tweaked version of the original.



(Above) It's snow joke! Madden 92 allows games to be played in arctic conditions, where the slippery pitch makes player control tougher. (Below) Nicer graphics and presentation all-round make Madden 92 a much more attractive prospect than its predecessor. Player control and pitch scrolling is now much faster and smoother.

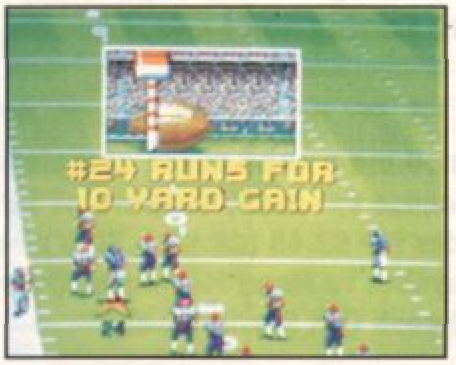
So what's new? Well, at first glance, not very much at all. The basic game remains almost identical in terms of how it is presented and played. There are no drastic changes to the viewpoint or control method, for example - yet at the same time almost no aspect of the game survives untweaked in one way or another.

The reason that the game may seem distressingly similar to the original initially is because many of the most important enhancements have been made in places where only playing the game will find them. There's a whole new set of strategy and plays, for instance, once again designed by Madden himself. All the most popular ones from the original game are there, backed up by a variety of new ones, some conservative, some outlandish. It's an improvement that's more likely to be of use to experienced John Maddeners - the original game boasted, after all, more than more than enough plays for the average player to be going on with, and so the new additions will only really be fully appreciated by those experts who found themselves eventually demanding more than the original game could offer.



Along with the extra plays, the teams themselves now come equipped with enhanced artificial intelligence, making for tougher opponents and theoretically allowing for more elaborate satisfying set-pieces - although making them happen is still primarily the player's responsibility. There's more to get to grips with on the arcade side, with injuries playing an important part - if a player is hurt too badly to carry on, he's carted off by a wailing ambulance and a substitution needs to be made. In addition, the two-player mode has been substantially revamped - now a pair of players need not be opponents - they can join forces against computer opposition, each controlling individual members of the same team. Needless to say, this allows for some very appealing gameplay, with one player passing to the other and making co-operative Touchdowns - and, of course, arguing about whose fault it was when things go wrong.

Extra little touches include scouting reports from Madden prior to the game and variable pitch surfaces and weather conditions, including rain, wind and snow. But if anything, it's the game's amazing user-friendliness that impresses most. American Football is at best a confusing game, but Madden 92 uses on-screen messages, sound cues and statistics in such a way that it's practically impossible to not understand what's going on. A superimposed title follows every play and game event to detail exactly what's happened, with Madden making frequent cameo appearances to provide remarkably informative statistics. Add to that no end of inset animation sequences that accompany important events and an action replay facility that features full video-style rewind/cue controls and you've got what is easily one of the most well-presented pieces of software ever seen.



Superimposed text and inset animations ensure that the player never misses a trick and is always up to date with what's happening. With a game as complex as this, it's invaluable stuff.

It seems a bit awkward to be Trailblazing two John Madden games in the same month, but the out-and-out skillness of this sequel quite frankly with no other option. It's a killer. If you've already got the original John Madden, whether or not you buy the sequel is entirely a matter of how much you like the game - devoted fans will of course leap at it, while those you weren't so struck probably won't be bowled over by the prospect of what is essentially more of the same. Those who never saw the original, however, should get themselves a copy of this pronto - you really don't know what you're missing. Well go on, then! What are you waiting for?

● **Gary Whitta**

ATARI
Discovery Xtra
520ST
TENSTAR GAMES PACK

ATARI ST
520ST-E DISCOVERY XTRA PACK

RETURN THE COUPON FOR A **FREE!** COLOUR CATALOGUE

HARDWARE:	
512K 520ST-E + MOUSE	£329.99
ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE:	
FINAL FIGHT - *Arcade Game*	£25.99
SIM CITY - *Life Sim*	£29.95
9 LIVES - *Arcade Game*	£19.95
ROBOT MONSTERS - *Arcade*	£20.42
PRODUCTIVITY SOFTWARE:	
CONTROL.ACC - *Utility Software*	FREE
EMULATOR.ACC - *Utility Software*	FREE
FIRST BASIC - *Programming*	£49.99
NEOCHROME - *Art Package*	£29.99
ST TOUR - *Tutorial*	£4.99
PLUS! FREE FROM SILICA:	
TENSTAR GAMES PACK	£219.78
PRODUCTIVITY PACK	£104.97
TOTAL VALUE:	£836.02
YOU SAVE:	£537.02
SILICA:	**£299**

PLUS! FREE HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

£299

1040ST-E FAMILY CURRICULUM PACK

The Family Curriculum Pack comes with a 1040ST-E computer and mouse plus 5 software modules (3 titles in each), one for every age range. The combination of education, creative and business software from Atari, plus the FREE entertainment and productivity packs from Silica, makes for a package the whole family can enjoy!

PLUS! ***FREE*** HOLIDAY ACCOM

1Mb 1040ST-E + MOUSE	£399.99
1. PLAY & LEARN	£76.59
2. JUNIOR SCHOOL	£58.54
3. GCSE REVISION	£55.54
4. BUSINESS COMPUTING	£159.85
5. CREATIVE COMPUTING	£134.97
PLUS! *FREE FROM SILICA*	
TENSTAR PACK	£219.78
PRODUCTIVITY PACK	£104.97
TOTAL VALUE:	£1210.23
YOU SAVE:	£811.23

£399

SILICA PRICE - INC VAT + FREE DELIVERY

ATARI 520ST-FM DISCOVERY PACK

£259

INC VAT + FREE DELIVERY + FREE TENSTAR & PRODUCTIVITY PACKS

ATARI ST - *MORE THAN JUST GREAT GAMES!*

FREE! FROM SILICA WITH EVERY ATARI ST

TENSTAR GAMES PACK

The TenStar Games Pack is THE software compendium for Atari ST owners, featuring ten top titles with a variety of different types of games for you to enjoy. Each title is packaged in its own plastic case, with a colour sleeve and full instructions. The TenStar Games Pack is FREE! when you buy your ST from Silica Systems.

FREE! WORTH: **£219.78**

TENSTAR GAMES PACK

TOTAL FREE PACKAGE

TENSTAR GAMES PACK - £219.78:	
Asterix - *By Coktel Vision*	**£24.99**
Chess Player 2150 - *By CP Software*	**£24.95**
Drivin' Force - *By Digital Magic*	**£19.95**
Live & Let Die - *By Elite*	**£19.99**
Onslaught - *By Hewson*	**£19.99**
Pipe Mania - *By Empire Software*	**£24.99**
Rick Dangerous - *By Firebird*	**£24.99**
Rock 'n' Roll - *By Rainbow Arts*	**£19.99**
Skweek - *By US Gold*	**£19.99**
Trivial Pursuit - *By Domark*	**£19.95**
PRODUCTIVITY PACK - £104.97:	
1st Word - *Word Processor*	**£59.99**
Spell It! - *Spell Checker*	**£19.99**
ST Basic - *Programming Language*	**£24.99**
TOTAL RRP:	**£324.75**

FREE! WORTH NEARLY: **£325**

PLUS! ***FREE*** HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

FREE! SILICA SYSTEMS ST PRODUCTIVITY PACK

Every Atari ST from Silica comes with a FREE Silica ST Productivity Pack, worth over £100. This pack has been specially put together by Silica to help you to get to grips with the productive side of computing from day one. Each title has been tried and tested by tens of thousands of Atari ST owners, who have begun word processing with 1st Word and programming with Atari ST Basic.

1st WORD - from GST	£59.99
SPELL IT! - for use with 1st WORD	£19.99
ST BASIC - with tutorial	£24.99
TOTAL RRP:	£104.97

FREE! 16 NIGHTS HOLIDAY HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Every Atari ST from Silica comes with a FREE 72 page, full colour brochure with accommodation vouchers. These vouchers entitle 2 people to stay up to 16 nights in one hotel (or any number of hotels to a total of 16 nights) with accommodation FREE (you could take up to six nights for four people, or other options). Choose from the 250 hotels featured in the catalogue. All you have to pay for are your meals (prices are listed in the brochure). Reduced rates in top London hotels and hotels in France are also featured.

SILICA SYSTEMS OFFER YOU

- ***FREE OVERNIGHT COURIER DELIVERY:*** On all hardware orders shipped in the UK.
- ***TECHNICAL SUPPORT HELPLINE:*** Team of Atari technical experts at your service.
- ***PRICE MATCH:*** We normally match competitors on a ''Same product - Same price'' basis.
- ***ESTABLISHED 12 YEARS:*** Proven track record in professional computer sales.
- ***BUSINESS + EDUCATION + GOVERNMENT:*** Volume discounts available for large orders.
- ***SHOWROOMS:*** Demonstration and training facilities at our London & Sidcup branches.
- ***THE FULL STOCK RANGE:*** All of your Atari requirements from one supplier.
- ***FREE CATALOGUES:*** Will be mailed to you with offers and software/peripheral details.
- ***PAYMENT:*** By cash, cheque and all major credit cards.

Before you decide when to buy your new Atari ST computer, we suggest you think very carefully about WHERE you buy it. Consider what it will be like a few months after buying your ST, when you may require additional peripherals or software, or help and advice with your new purchase. And, will the company you buy from contact you with details of new products? At Silica Systems, we ensure that you will have nothing to worry about. We have been established for over 12 years and, with our unrivalled experience and expertise, we can now claim to meet our customers requirements with an understanding which is second to none. But don't just take our word for it. Complete and return the coupon now for our latest Free literature and begin to experience the ''Silica Systems Service''.

☎ MAIL ORDER HOTLINE **081-309 1111**

SILICA SYSTEMS

MAIL ORDER:	1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX	**Tel: 081-309 1111**
Order Lines Open: Mon-Sat 9.00am-6.00pm	No Late Night Opening	Fax No: 081-308 0608
LONDON SHOP:	52 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1P 0BA	**Tel: 071-580 4000**
Opening Hours: Mon-Sat 9.30am-6.00pm	Late Night: Thursday until 8pm	Fax No: 071-323 4737
LONDON (SELFRIDGES):	1st Floor, 369 Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB	**Tel: 071-629 1234**
Opening Hours: Mon-Sat 9.30am-6.00pm	Late Night: Thursday until 8pm	Ask for extension 3914
SIDCUP SHOP:	1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX	**Tel: 081-302 8811**
Opening Hours: Mon-Sat 9.00am-5.30pm	Late Night: Friday until 7pm	Fax No: 081-309 0017

To: Silica Systems, Dept ACE-1291-63, 1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX

PLEASE SEND FREE ATARI COLOUR CATALOGUE

Mr/Mrs/Ms: .... Initials: .... Surname: ....

Address: ....

....

....

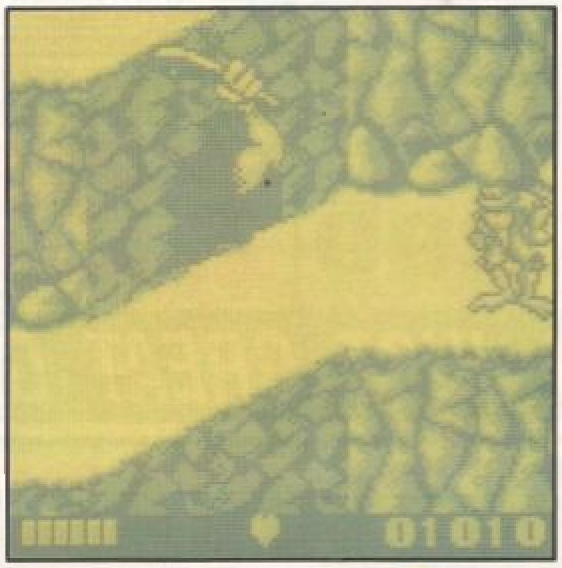
Postcode: .... Tel: ....

Which computer(s), if any, do you own? 63B

BATTLETOADS

Oh, how hilarious. There are these three Toads, right, called... wait for it... Zitz, Rash and - oh, my sides are splitting - Pimple. These rad guys like to party on, dude, and hang tough. Lead by their guide and mentor Prof T. Bird (like the car - geddit?) they battle against the sexily evil Dark Queen. Contrary to rumour, they're nothing like the Turtles at all. For a start, they've got different names. And there are four Turtles. And... er... that's it.

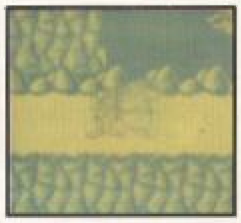
I suppose it's inevitable that given the (now fading) success of the Turtles others will try to jump on the bandwagon. Frankly, I've had it up to here with bloody pubescent mutant animals spouting California beach bum drivel. And I've also had it up to here and beyond with uninspired and uninspiring horizontally scrolling beat-'em-ups. So it's a bit of shame that Battletoads is both of these hated categories in one.



As a beat-'em-up Battletoads fares okay. It's pretty good fun and the fighting animations are a laugh. However, there's little skill involved - fight success is simply a case of hitting the fire button like fury. Every alternate level is a shoot-'em-up, with the Toad jumping into his nifty spaceship. Again, these levels are hardly ground-breaking, but they add variety to the package. If this sort of game is your bag, you'll probably enjoy what's on offer here. Personally, it left me cold.

Now, how long before we get the Samurai Pizza Cats game?

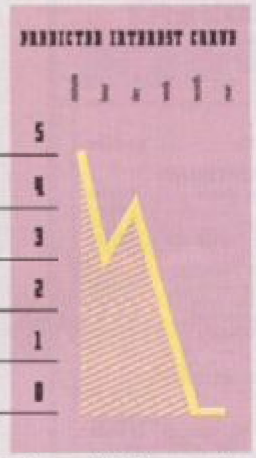
● David Upchurch



PRICE
£24.99
(Import)

👍	👎
Humorous characters. Adrenalin-pumpingly fast action. Varied gameplay.	Uninspired game design. Frustratingly tough in places. Control can be annoyingly imprecise.

BATTLETOADS RATINGS



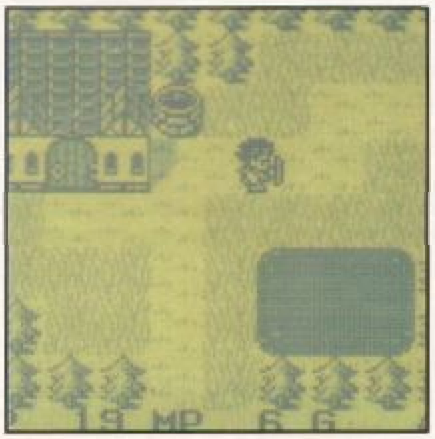
Looks good, but the gameplay is hardly anything to write home about. Even the later introduction of ropes and other platform-related obstacles doesn't help add much depth, and because of the 'wacky' animation it can be hard working out exactly where your Toad is standing, making it frustratingly easy to fall off a ledge rather than nudge up to the edge of it. The shoot-'em-up levels are frenetically fun, but tough in places.

G	IQ	A	FF
9	2	7	6

GAMEBOY RATING **745**

FINAL
FANTASY

Now this is impressive. There are two problems with the *Fighting Fantasy* books. One: you can cheat. Two: the visuals are limited to a set of line drawings for only the most exciting scenes. Nevertheless, the books themselves make perfect Tube-travelling material, so the prospect of playing an entirely accessible, enormous, perfectly pitched fantasy role playing game on a cheat-free Gameboy, with graphics and without the need for paper, pencil or dice, is most appealing.



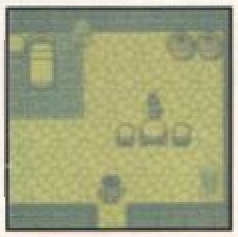
The Dark Lord is seeking the Tree of Mana which can be found at the top of a waterfall in a mystic kingdom. And it's up to the player to prevent the Lord from getting his hands on the Tree and plunging the whole world into evil darkness and misery.

And so, after defeating a big cat in a rather peculiar opening sequence, the player begins his quest. Exploring the land is thoroughly amusing, and the player will be fully versed - thanks to little pop-up boxes - in the storyline and the nature of his quest long before any actual adventuring begins.

As you would expect, Final Fantasy Adventure has all the requisite adventuring features: objects to collect; characters to interact with; monsters to defeat; currency; etc. But partially owing to the cute nature of the Japanese-looking heroes and partially owing to the cunningly devised adventure itself which prevents the player aimlessly wandering around for long periods, Final Fantasy Adventure allows the player to become instantly and thoroughly involved.

Final Fantasy Adventure is a class product. There's plenty to recommend it, most of which you've just read, so buy it.

● Jim Douglas



Hello, young man
Welcome to Topple

PRICE
£24.99
(Import)

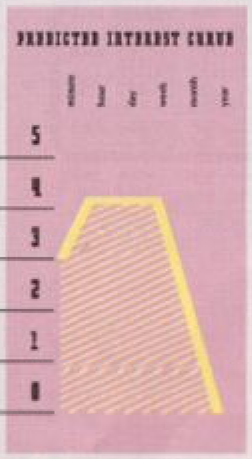
👍	👎
Top quality presentation. It's a real adventure! Battery back-up	None!

GAMEBOY RATING **820**

G	IQ	A	FF
8	2	5	7

Top quality lasting power, thanks to the battery back-up SAVE feature, coupled with immeditate gratification of being able to get straight into the adventure make Final Fantasy Adventure a great prospect for both the novice adventurer and the top RPG-er alike.

FINAL FANTASY RATINGS



TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 2

PLAYER SELECT

PRICE
£24.99
(Import)

- Excellent tunes and speech.
- Simple but enjoyable gameplay.
- Bonus levels add to the fun.

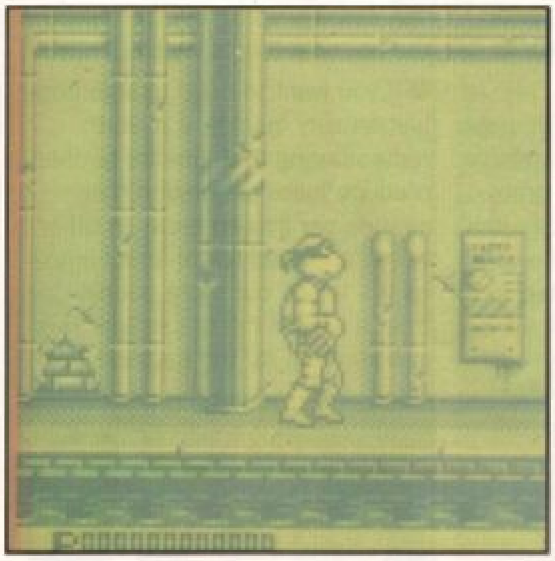
- Not too hard to complete.
- Can get repetitively dull.
- 'Stiff' animation.

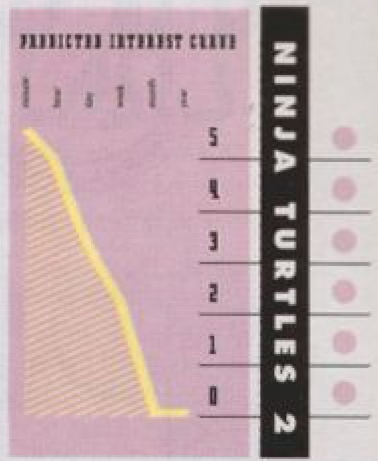
Cowabunga! (Okay, I know it's a cliché using the Turtles' battle cry to start off a review or feature about them but what else can you do?) Actually, it has more relevance than usual because in this, the second Turtles game from Konami (hence the '2' in the title - sharp, eh?), the Turtles actually shout "Cowabunga!" at the start of each level. And "Pizza time!" when you pause the game. Thank God for the miracle of digitised speech.

This speech is exemplary of the superb presentation throughout the game - this cart is jam-packed with tunes, interlude graphics and animations and a brilliant intro sequence, making it one of the best looking and sounding Gameboy games around. It's a pity then that the game is so disappointing.

It's a five-level rescue mission to save April O'Neil from the clutches of Shredder (again). As in the previous game this involves lots of running around a horizontally-scrolling background, kicking and lopping members of the Foot Clan out of the way, culminating in a end-of-level showdown with one of Shredder's major henchmen - Be Bop, Rock Steady and the rest of the gang. Okay, so the graphics are bigger (although the animation is stilted - the characters walk around as if they've got rods up their backs) and there are some nice sub-games between levels, but this is really just more of the same.

● **David Upchurch**





NINJA TURTLES 2

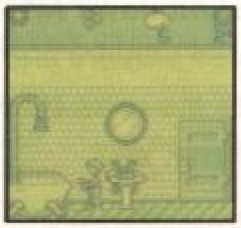
RATINGS

Great graphics and even better tunes - the rollicking Turtles theme on the title screen certainly gets you in the mood for some terrapin-style action. The gameplay is simple - just run and thump - but fun none-theless. This is an enjoyable but uninspired sequel - basically it's just the first Turtles game with bigger graphics.

G	IQ	A	FF
8	2	8	9

785 GAMEBOY RATING

HOME ALONE



PRICE
£24.99
(Import)

- Nice puzzles and traps.
- Simple, enjoyable gameplay.

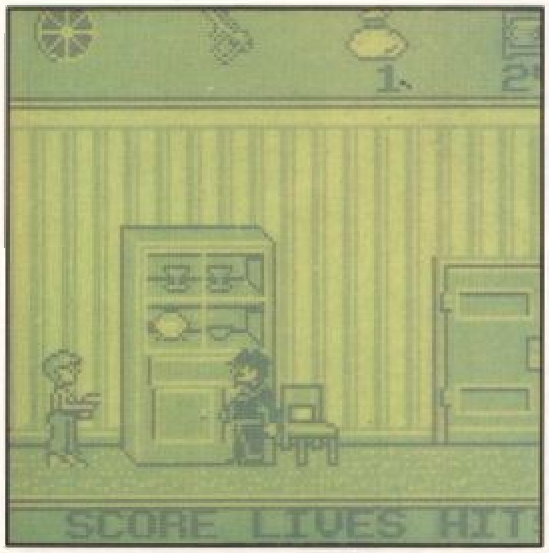
- Ultimately repetitive.
- Very tough on later levels.

Well, we all know about the film. Sentimentality-master John Hughes' blockbusting comedy isn't perhaps the most appropriate for game adaptation. Nevertheless Toy Headquarters have hit the mark well. Not surprisingly, it's based around the film's more action-orientated segment, the last half-hour when the two burglars are adeptly fended off by little Macaulay Culkin.

As diminutive house protector Kevin, the player's task is to run around the giant Mcallister abode (represented as a series of flick screens) and collect up all the items of value before the two prowling bandits can get their hands on them. As the valuables are collected from sideboards, cabinets and other less obvious hiding places, they must be dropped off into one of the house's laundry chutes, thus safely stashing them in the locked basement below. The thieves cause the obvious problems, stealing any objects that Kevin is too slow to collect as well as extracting precious hit points upon contact.

True to the film, Kevin can fight back with a variety of collectible weapons and by setting simple traps (dropping banana skins, etc). With all the items in the house safely stashed there's a quick sub-level fighting insects in the basement (?) and then it's back for more on the next level. And actually, it's all a bit of a laugh, with plenty of playable platform action and gameplay that requires genuine skill and cunning. Repetitive it may be, but strangely it doesn't diminish the game's addictive qualities one jot. Most excellent.

● **Gary Whitta**



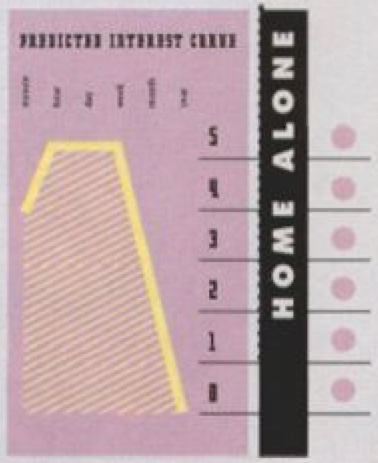
Special thanks to Shekhana Consoles (081 889 9412) for the loan of these review cartridges.

835 GAMEBOY RATING

G	IQ	A	FF
7	4	6	8

On the surface it may not seem like there's much there, but the different traps, weapons and other collectables do a lot to add to the enjoyment. It's not exactly a sprawling platform epic, but what's there is challenging enough to hold interest for quite a while, and the house is easily big enough to get lost in. The graphics may be sparse, but are attractive all the same, and sound is particularly pleasing, featuring a jolly rendition of the film's title tune. Go on, give it a whirl.

RATINGS



HOME ALONE

POPULOUS II

Okay, so you got it for Christmas, you loaded it up, you got hooked - but things are starting to get a little tricky, aren't they? But have no fear, Bullfrog's here with a veritable cornucopia of tricky tricks and happy hints. They've been handily broken down into three levels for beginners, intermediates players and experts, so all you have to do is refer to the ones that deal with your own standard of play. Nifty, eh?

I'M JUST STARTING OUT AND I'M NOT REALLY VERY GOOD AT ALL

- If you've never played the original Populous, it's understandable that you might have a few problems getting to grips with the land management system. At the outset of the game it's vital that land is built and levelled quickly so that people can settle and you can get an early power foothold. When raising land from the sea, raise twice on the same point then lower the top to flatten it out. This technique produces more land, faster than raising each point individually. It does, however, use slightly more manna.

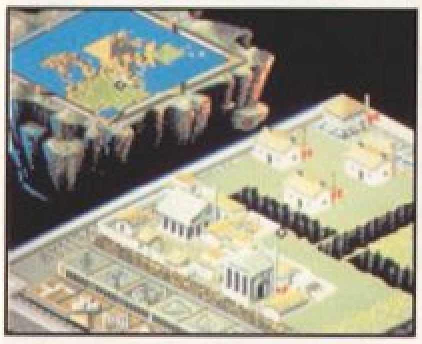
- Don't concentrate your land-levelling all in one place. In the early part of the game, people walking around without a house are no good to you at all. Wherever you see walkers, level land immediately so they can settle. And keep 'sprogging' houses - clicking on them to eject people. Do this as soon as possible - on many of the early landscapes you can actually sprog people before the house's flag is visible.

- If you want to build a large population very quickly, it's worth remembering that smaller houses produce more population than castles per screen area - in other words a screen full of small houses will knock out more people than a screen full of castles. This is a good tip for the beginning of the game, but be careful as it may cause problems with manna. As you progress further into the game you should go all out for castles, as manna is needed for the godly effects.

I'VE GOT THE HANG OF THIS NOW AND RECKON MYSELF A BIT

- Papal Magnets are very useful for directing people to where you want them to settle. Move your magnet to a place where you want them to settle and click your people into Go To Magnet mode - but make sure your Leader isn't in a house first. When your people reach the magnet, simply click them back into Settle mode.

- When building a hero (with the exception of Helen of Troy, who doesn't fight) always make sure you have a strong leader (the ban-



ners at the top of the coliseum should be flying in the fourth bar at least) holding a sword before you click on the effect. This ensures that you don't waste a load of manna on creating a hopeless hero.

- Early on in the game, try basalting around the enemy's land. This will make these areas uninhabitable and cause problems with settling. The only way to retrieve the land is to place verdant areas over the basalt.

- Always build castle walls around your territory once you have a large 'city'. These are extremely effective, and can only be broken down by very strong people or certain effects.

- Try to kill the enemy's leader. The best tactics are with swamps, earthquakes or (best of the lot) baptismal fonts. If the leader is going to the Papal Magnet, lay traps around it and you'll kill a lot of his followers as well.

- The effect that covers the most area is Batholith - those little pimply rocks. For maximum effect hold down the mouse button on a large hilly area. It's a very expensive effect though, so only use it if you're flush.

- If you have plagued people, the safest thing to do is kill them off immediately before they spread the disease. There are alternatives - you can try dipping them in baptismal fonts (they will then spread the plague to the other side) or sending them to attack the enemy as a hero. Whatever you decide, do it fast - plague can spread alarmingly quickly.

- Volcanoes are well worth doing as they render the land unusable to the enemy, as well as creating mass destruction. For real property damage, try planting lots of forests around the area you intend to volcano beforehand.

I'VE GOT THIS SUSSED. COME AND HAVE A GO IF YOU THINK YOU'RE HARD ENOUGH!

- Combine effects for greater devastation. Placing forests around enemy land and then setting fire to them is particularly nasty. Also, try putting a whirlwind at the point where a tidal wave hits the land.

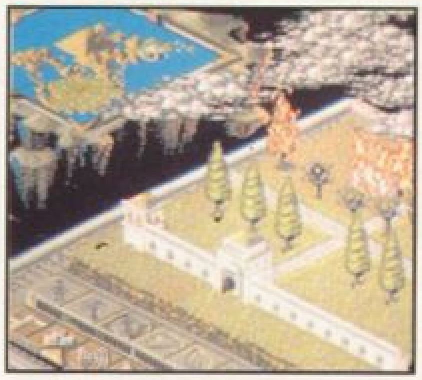
- In the latter part of the game, where most of the land is flat, Fungus can be particularly lethal. Try experimenting with different patterns, and create a library of patterns for use in different situations. It's possible to create assassins, missiles (firing out in eight directions), bombs and waves.

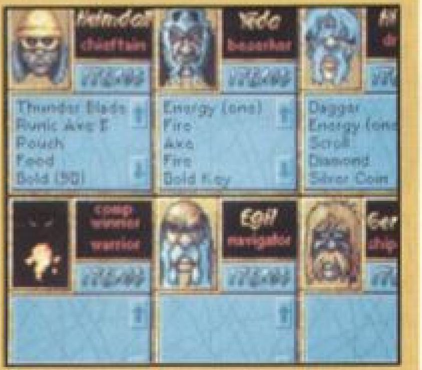
- When sending out a hero, cover the enemy terrain in effects from that hero's own group. This allows you to create awesome combined destruction without hurting the hero, as they are immune to effects from their own group.

- The player gains manna from each battle he wins. If somebody is killed by an effect then no manna is gained. To get around this problem, you can hit people with effects just to weaken them (say, with a lightning bolt), then have them beaten up by your own men. This only really works if you have people nearby in fight mode.

- This is a really dirty one. Go deep into enemy territory and lay a group of baptismal fonts. Then, use the people they create to lower some of the land down into the water. Place a whirlpool in the little pond you have created and it will eat away at his land from the inside out! You may have to keep on refilling the pond with whirlpools for maximum effect.

- Before you use a Hurricane effect to blow enemy people off the map, lay down a series of swamps and earthquakes behind the target city. The wind will them blow them into the traps.



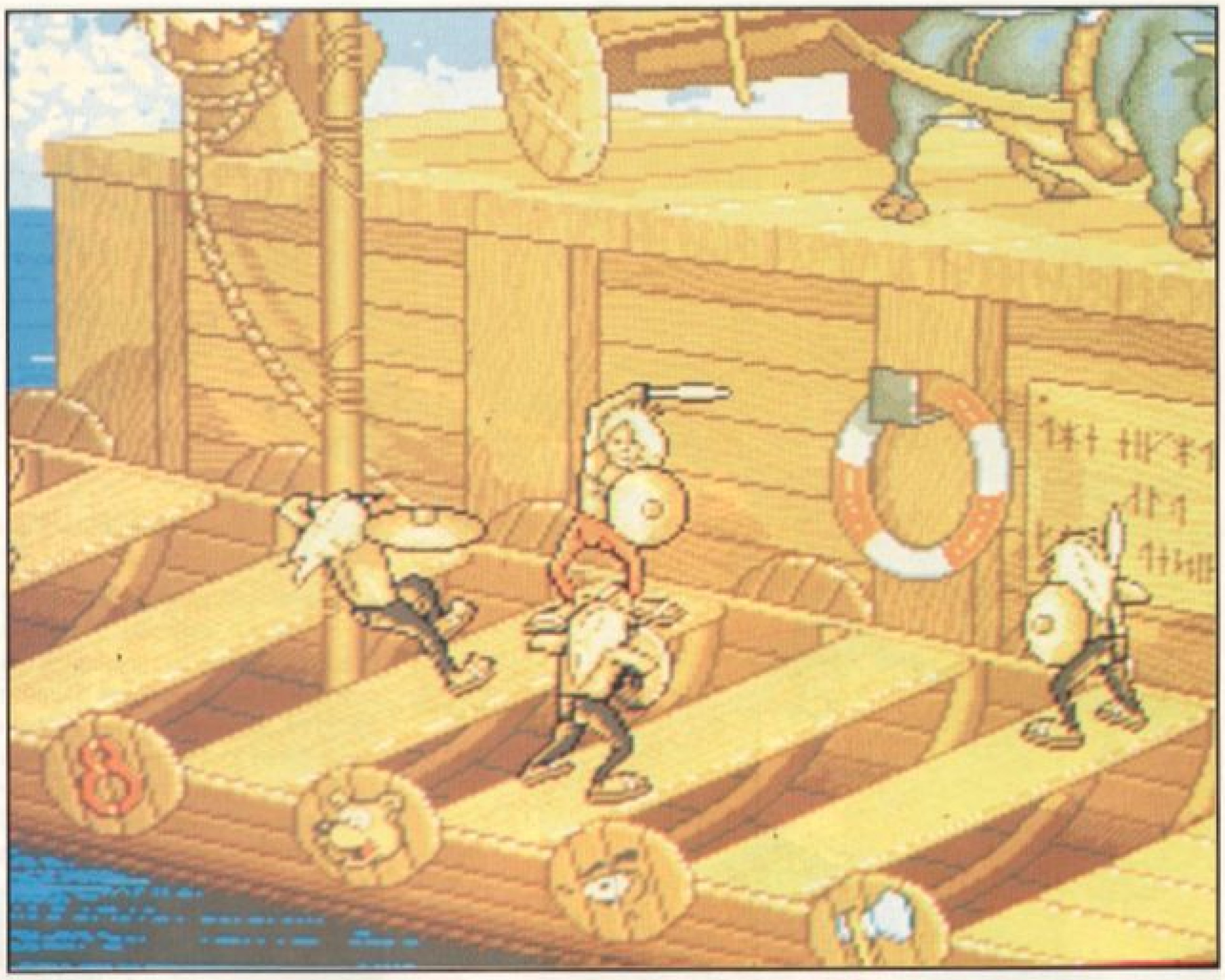


CHESTS

- Don't bother using a Disarm Traps spells on a chest - it's not worth wasting a valuable spell on it for the few health points saved.

THE GAME

- Beware of booby-trapped floor switches - some of them activate arrows.
- Watch out for hidden pits around chests.
- Try to keep to the edge in a room or passage just in case there are traps in the middle. You might find a trap around the edge but it's better than running into two or more in the middle!
- Try to concentrate on increasing Heimdall's or the wizard's Rune Lore skills. This is done with potions marked with various Rune symbols - some increase strength/health, others increase Rune Lore. This will aid in reading scrolls and using certain spells within the game. (There are some potions on the third island in Midgard!)
- Watch out for spiders' web! Don't get too close otherwise you might run into a spider and they're very mean and nasty.



TINY TIPS

There are some times when long playing guides won't do. When all you need is a passcode to the next level, or a cheat for infinite lives. This, dear reader, is where Tiny Tips comes in handy.

LOTUS 2

Brummmm! Put the pedal to the metal with the passes to all eight levels of Gremlin's runaway success, all thanks to Ryan Beckett of Hucclecote, Gloucester.

LEVEL 2 - TWILIGHT
LEVEL 3 - PEA SOUP
LEVEL 4 - THE SKIDS
LEVEL 5 - PEACHES
LEVEL 6 - LIVERPOOL
LEVEL 7 - BAGLEY
LEVEL 8 - E BOW

NINJA GAIDEN

This GameGear beat-'em-up has some surprisingly obvious five-letter passcodes. Read on, and see what I mean...

LEVEL 2 - NINJA
LEVEL 3 - GIDEN
LEVEL 4 - DRGON
LEVEL 5 - SWORD

PUTT N' PUTTER

More GameGear shenanigans, but of a more subdued nature. These codes will take you right up to 'Master' level.

LEVEL 2 - PKDKE
LEVEL 3 - SAQAQ
LEVEL 4 - HKJKK
LEVEL 5 - HKMKH
LEVEL 6 - FKPKD
LEVEL 7 - PUTT
LEVEL 8 - FLDKG

GET YER TIPS OOT!

We want to give you free - yes, FREE! - software. Actually that's a bit of a lie. First you've got to send us some tips or playing guides or solutions or anything that comes in handy for cracking a game - you know the sort of thing. In return, assuming we print the fruits of your labour, we'll send you a free piece of software for your machine (more for a particularly outstanding piece of work). A bargain, I'm sure you'll agree. So send your tips (and name, address and machine owned) to: ACE Tip Top Tips, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

HEIMDALL

Is this all-singing, all-dancing Viking game sending you berserk? Calm down, comb your beard and ponder on these fine beginner's tips from the brigands responsible - Core Design themselves!

SELECTING A CREW

The optimum crew should consist of:

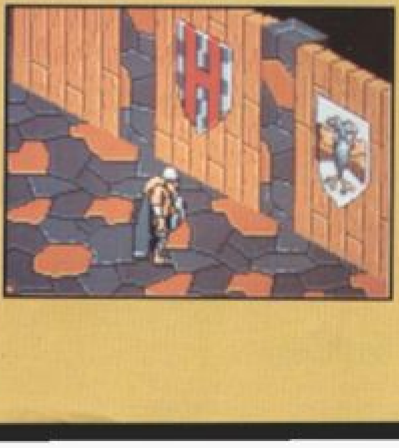
- **BERSERKER** - These are very useful in combat due to their high strength and sturdy health ratings.
- **WARRIOR** - Like the Berserker, these come into their own in combat.
- **WIZARD** - These act as a back-up to Heimdall's own Rune Lore and spell-casting skills (just in case you accidentally kill off Heimdall!).
- **BLACKSMITH** - These normally match or better the strength of warriors but they don't have as much dexterity or as many rune-related skills. However, they're still useful in combat.
- **NAVIGATOR** - These warn you if you'll lose energy on sea journeys, giving you the chance to get more food before departing.

GENERAL TIPS

- Before selecting an island, distribute all the gold to one member of your landing party and use this person as your gold holder within the party (this saves carrying space). Do this with keys as well so that you don't lose track of who's got what key in your party.
- Collect lots of food. Not only is this the best way of keeping the crew alive and well, you also need it to keep everyone going during the long sea journeys. On the map screen, always take the opportunity to distribute spare food to the other crew members on the ship.
- Always remember to check the party's health stats during the game, especially Heimdall, and keep them well fed.
- Any spells that can't be read by any of the crew should always be kept, just in case it's a Resurrection or Energy (All) spell that you might need later!
- Discard any unwanted weapons (see Combat Hints for the best selection) as they take up valuable storage space.
- Always examine any scrolls after finding them and discard any that you have lots of (i.e. Detect/Disarm Traps), or alternatively store them back at the ship.

COMBAT HINTS

- Always check your party's health before attacking an enemy, especially Heimdall's as he's the main character and best all-rounder, and we can't have you killing him off, can we?
- Use daggers as these work faster than swords and axes. Change Heimdall's weapon to a dagger if he doesn't have one because he's the first character into combat.
- The best weapons to use are silver daggers, Rune swords and Runic axes as these deliver more damage than normal weapons.
- If you use any of the swords, remember to time your hits with the enemy's (attack just as they prepare to strike). This should give you more hits than just swinging madly at the enemy.
- Always keep an eye on the health bar of the character who is fighting. If it gets too low then swap characters or use a health spell on them.

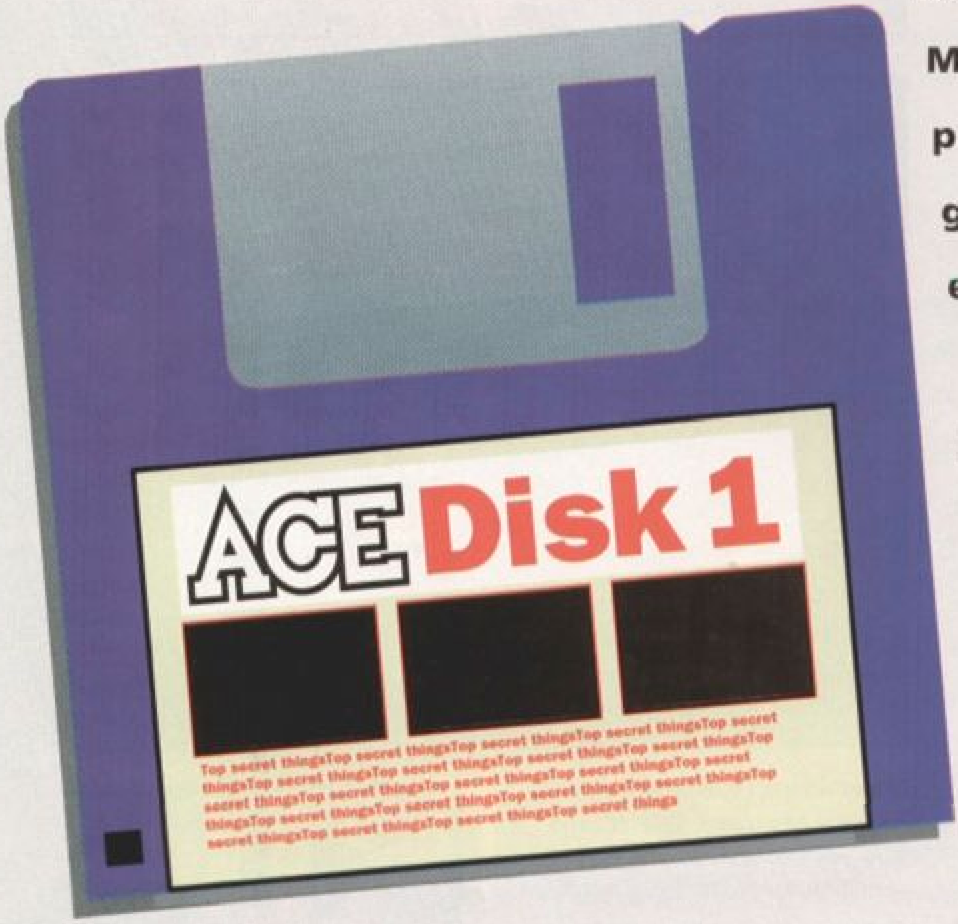


next!

ACE Disk 1!

Your favourite games magazine switches into overdrive next month with a stunning front-cover disk!

That's right. Response to our new look has been so positive that we've been spurred on to give our readers even MORE! From now on, not only will ACE supply you with the best reading matter on the games scene, but we'll be providing the best electronic matter too.



Every issue from March will boast a disk packed to the very gills/limit/brim (take your pick) with top quality games excellence.

So why the disk? And why now? Simple really. Before we activated this ultimate phase in our plan for world domination, we wanted to be sure that all elements of magazine quality would be in place and solid. We wanted to be sure we could offer both an excellent disk and the best mag on the market. The worst thing

we could imagine would be to simply stick a disk on the front and allow the editorial quality to slide (as you may have noticed is the case with some disky mags).

But now were confident that we simply can't get any more wholesome goodness into the issue itself, we're going to allow our rollicking games-gathering talents spill over onto a disk.

And as well as the cosmic nature of the disk, whose quality we wouldn't wish you to underestimate, we'll be providing you with an even more fact'n'fun-filled issue, containing, should you be in any doubt:

★ Another 43-page Screentest section, offering the most detailed games buying information anywhere.

★ A new and improved News section, with 100% relevant games stories from around the globe.

★ An even BIGGER Previews section, with MORE pictures, MORE games and MORE exclusives than EVER BEFORE!

★ Earlier In the Works features, full of secret development information on games at their rawest.

So go and buy it, eh?

ACE March - £2.70 with Tri-Format Disk

On the Shelves February 8th

But not for long.

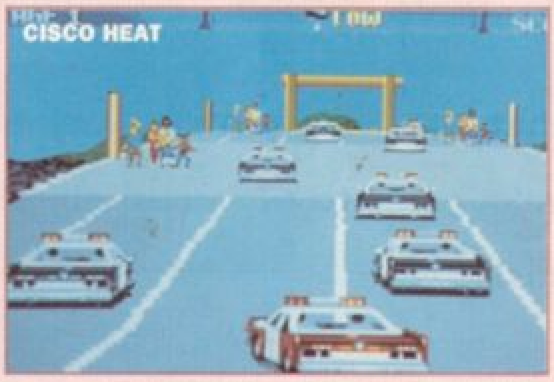
MOONSTONE

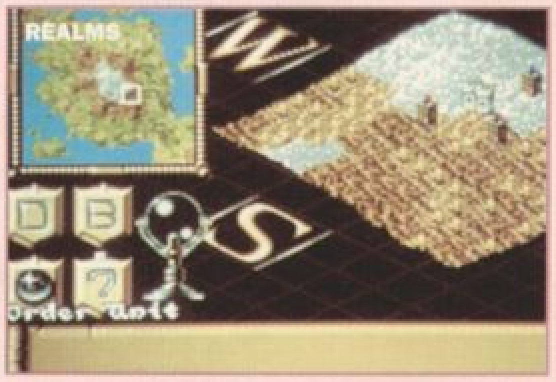
KNIGHTMARE

THUNDER BURNER

TOEJAM & EARL

F22 INTERCEPTOR


CISCO HEAT


REALMS

PACMAN

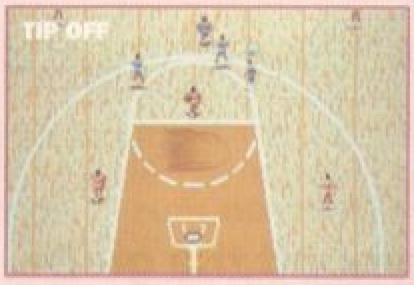
GREAT NAPOLEONIC BATTLES

SUSPICIOUS CARGO

HARD DRIVIN'

ROBOCOP 2

TURTLES 2


TIP OFF

PUTT & PUTTER

new releases

Well, another month ticks relentlessly by and once again a new batch of fresh'n'fun software hits the streets. Also once again, you can rely on ACE's comprehensive reviews directory to provide you with the most definitive guide to all the latest wares. And, just to make sure you get a good oggle as well, we kick off the section with a whole page filled with choice photos from a selection of what we're looking at this month. What more could anyone ask?

reviews directory

You would not *believe* the amount of games we've got reviewed over the next thirty (count 'em) pages. Well, alright, so you probably would, but that still doesn't prevent us from finding it pretty amazing ourselves that we can cram so much hard games information into a single edition of the magazine.

Rather than simply giving a breakdown of plusses and minuses of each game, we try to actually put a bit of effort into the reviews, but then we would say that, wouldn't we?

Still enough bullshit, let's get on with the Directory. Opposite are lists of New Releases and Still Available games found in the Directory. And immediately below this glowing passage of finely crafted words is a breakdown of our intricate and revolutionary scoring system. We hope you enjoy your trip.

☆☆☆☆☆	**Excellent**
☆☆☆☆	**Very Good**
☆☆☆	**Above Average**
☆☆	**Poor**
☆	**Dismal**

New Releases:

Amnios
Barbarian II
Birds of Prey
Cisco Heat
Conan The Cimmerian
F-22
Galaga '91
Great Napoleonic Battles
Hard Drivin'
Hare Rasin' Havoc
Knightmare
Medieval Warriors
Moonstone
Never Ending Story 2
Pacman
Put 'n' Putter
Realms
Robocop 2
Shuttle
Sliders
Steve McQueen
Tip Off
Turtles - The Coin-op
Thunderblurner
Toejam & Earl
Traders

Still Available:

A320 Airbus
Action Pack
Another World
Breach 2
Aerostar
Alien Breed
Armourgeddon
Atomino
Baby Jo
Battle Isle
Bugs Bunny 2
Burger Time Deluxe
Captain Planet
Castellian
Castlevania IV
Celtic Legends
Centurion (Defender of Rome)
Choplifter 2
Civilization
Crime Time
Cruise For A Corpse
Deathbringer
Deuterous
Devil Crash
Devious Designs
Double Dragon III
EA Hockey
Elf
Epic
Eye of the Beholder 2
F-15 Strike Eagle 2
Face Off
Fatal Rewind
Fighter Command
Final Blow
FInal Fight
First Samurai
Flicky
Floor 13
Football Director 2
Formula 1 Grand Prix
Fuzzball
The Games - Winter Challenge
Gunship 2000
Hard Nova
Heimdall
Hudson Hawk
Hunter
The Immortal
Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker
Lotus Turbo Challenge 2
Last Ninja 3
Leisure Suit Larry 5
Mad TV
Magic Garden
Martian Memorandum
Megafortress
Mega lo Mania
Megatraveller 2
Megatwins
Mercs
MiG29M Superfulcrum
Might & Magic 3
Monster Business
Nebulus 2
Outrun
Outrun Europa
Pegasus
Pitfighter
Populous 2
Railroad Tycoon
Rise of the Dragon
Robin Hood
Robocod
Robocop 3
Robozone
Rodland
Rugby - The World Cup
Sarakon
Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe
Seven Colours
Silent Service II
Solitaire Poker
Smash TV
Thunderhawk
Strike Fleet
Under Pressure
Utopia
Volfied
Vroom
Willy Beamish
Wing Commander II
Wolfchild
World Class Rugby

new releases

AMNIOS

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Psygnosis**

Hooray! *Defender* for the 90s! Well, that's the idea. The shame is it doesn't *quite* work.

Amnios is a plan-viewed multiway scrolling shoot-'em-up. The player zips around the surfaces of ten living planets in his ship, zapping the bad guys and rescuing the trapped humans. By shooting certains pods the player can upgrade his ship with better weaponry.

And that's it. It's that simple. Of course, with this sort of game you're not looking for depth - you're looking for action. And in this respect Amnios does pretty well. The scrolling is smooth, sound suitably raucous, and the graphics have an attractive organic/mutated look to them.

Trouble is, I didn't really feel much compulsion to work my way through the first world, let alone the tenth. Control over the ship isn't quite as 'reflexive' as it should be, and this detracts from the fun badly. Not my cup of tea, but it may well be yours. Give it a look.

☆☆☆

BARBARIAN II

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Psygnosis**

Psygnosis games have historically always been visual treats held back by some less than excellent games design. However, with *Lemmings* that all changed and the company justly earned themselves a reputation for being able to turn out top-notch software of both high visual standard and demanding gameplay.

And for a moment it looks as if Barbarian II may be another title in the Lemmings vein. Unfortunately, this is patently not the case, since once the player has got through the obligatory loading sequence (a whole disk's worth) it becomes clear that Barbarian II is neither a vista of beauty for the eyes, or a particularly great place to explore with a joystick.

With left-right scrolling with paths leading into and out of the screen, objects to collect, weapons to horde and monsters to despatch, Barbarian really doesn't offer the player anything new, and has been carried off to much better effect in both *Gods* and *Torvak the Warrior*. Shame.

☆☆

BIRDS OF PREY

Price **Amiga £29.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

Well, it's been four years in the making, but at last Hawk - oops, I mean Birds of Prey - has touched down. But has it been worth the wait? Well... sort of.

Let's make no bones about it, Birds of Prey is an excellent flight simulator and, as the name suggests, there's no shortage of dogfighting action. On a technical level it's astounding, and probably its more impressive aspect is the number of planes you're given the opportunity to fly - no less than 40 individual combat aircraft!

Birds of Prey is much more the thinking-man's simulation - very much in the MicroProse mould - and not really the more simplistic, combat-orientated Interceptor-type affair that many of us were expecting. That said, it's not all just flying from waypoint to waypoint and falling asleep in-between. There's more than enough hard-nosed action to keep anybody happy. The 3D update is surprisngly okay, considering how much the program is having to juggle, but somehow it just doesn't seem like the result of four years' programming.

Ultimately, what you've got with Birds of Prey is a game that's tried to do a bit of everything and comes off surprisingly well at the end of it. If anything it leans a little too far torwards the technical side of things (reading the manual is an achievement in itself), but nevertheless Birds of Prey comes wholeheartedly recommend to all flight-sim fans.

☆☆☆☆

CISCO HEAT

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Image Works**

In the light of a whole bunch of driving games, some of which have been nothing short of excellent, (*Lotus 2, Grand Prix*) Image Works' launch of this rather dreadful title couldn't have come at a worse time.

Not only will the consumer have had his fill of driving in general, but he will also be fully aware that it's possible to produce auto-action games a thousand times better than this.

The aim is to race a souped up police car through the hilly streets of San Fransisco, avoiding taxi-cabs, trams and skyscrapers in an attempt to emerge as the top cop driver in the city.

Quite aside from the 3D routines which make *Turbo Outrun* look polished and some astonishingly dull courses, Cisco Heat stalls at virtually every corner. The races themselves are painful and frustrating, the crowd graphics are basically a single graphic block duplicated to fill the space, the police car crashes into skyscrapers only a fraction larger than itself, and the corner turning routine, however brave the attempt, is a catastrophe.

Mind you, the sound of the car's horn is quite good.

☆

CONAN THE CIMMERIAN

Price **IBM PC £29.99**
Genre **Role Playing Game**
Publisher **Virgin Games**

The problem with Conan is that he doesn't really know whether he wants to be a serious game or a funny game. The opening sequence is a mixture of pratfall comedy and intended menace, accompanied by some of the most awful music I've ever heard. (While some people may argue it's fashionably dissonant, I reckon it sounds like the twangings of a Fisher Price "My First Guitar" being played in the bath.)

Anyway, the curious mixture of semi-plan view exploration and side-on hacking works reasonably well, with Conan looking every inch the super-hero he's *supposed to be. And there's plenty to* explore.

Even the adventuring side is pretty good, and Conan can interact (albeit on a pretty basic level) with every character he encounters.

So if you feel that there is space on your shelf for yet another revenge-quest game, and can live with the atmosphere-crushing laughs, it may be worth a look.

☆☆☆

F-22 INTERCEPTOR

Price **Megadrive £39.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

The first "real" flight simulation to arrive on Sega's 16-bit baby is, as many might expect, a whole lot more simplistic than comparable products on computer. The drill is pretty much routine - strap yourself into the cockpit of your prototype fighter and kick some butt over a series of increasingly-dangerous missions.

Because console controls are far more limited than those available on computer (no keyboard you see), F-22 doesn't offer all the technical bits and bobs featured in your average Microprose product. What it does do, however, is play surprisingly like a "real" simulation, given the limitations of the controls. When playing from one of the outside views, it may look like just another version of Afterburner, but it really does play properly, with cannons and missile targetting all working realistically.

Considering it's a console game, F-22 Interceptor is a pretty remarkable achievement, and EA deserves to be congratulated for making the effort to produce something a bit more taxing (both for the player and the machine) than just another two-player shoot'em-up. If you're used to what computer-based flight simulations can do, it's unlikely you'll be impressed by what F-22 Interceptor has to ffer. If you're not, however, and you're a bit fed up with the standard Megadrive arcade drudge, you could well be onto a winner here.

☆☆☆☆

GALAGA '91

Price **Game Gear £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Import**

Arrrggghh! You filthy, wretched, sucking little alien bastards! Anyone who played the original *Galaga* in the arcades, or better still the BBC version called *Zalaga* from Aardvark will be thoroughly versed in the extreme temper tantrums the induced.

However, in these incarnations, the game had that elusive spark of sheer addictiveness that meant no matter how many times that nigh-on invisible alien bullet destroyed the player's craft and sent him back to the start of the level, it never became annoying enough to prevent the player returning.

Here, the likelihood of a gamer using up all his Continues is extremely remote. It's the sort of game that leaves you feeling so mad and impotent that you have to turn off the power in order to wreak some revenge on the buy-eyed fiends.

Nevertheless, a top-notch scrolling shoot-out this is. Not quite as good as the superb *Halley Wars*, but boasting an infinite number of levels (with simply an increasing number and ferocity of aliens) and some entertainingly learnable flight patterns, it's not bad.

It's basically the nth derivation of the Invaders/Galaxians theme with jazzier aliens and graphics.

The main problems lie in the fact that the player can only have two bullets flying on the screen at any one time, and the annoying habit the aliens have of circling at the bottom of the screen, killing the player who makes the mistake of thinking that he's satisfactorily dodged an attack.

☆☆☆

GREAT NAPOLEONIC BATTLES

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Impressions**

You've got to laugh. The shots on the back of the box tell all about a product like this. "Create new battlefield with over 150 terrain pieces" says the caption under a picture of some grass and bushes. "Franch infantry advance on Reves" says the one under the picture with some green squares with crosses on.

But if you're sniggering, you shouldn't, because impressions certainly know how to put together a top-notch historical wargame, even if they can't draw graphics to save their lives.

Great Napoleonic Battles offers the player the chance to become Napoleon himself, or the commander of one of the unfortunate territories to fall under his control.

OPTICAL
Mail Order Limited

Please make cheques/P.O Orders payable to
OPTICAL MAIL ORDER LIMITED,
17 Serby Avenue
Royston, Herts, SG8 5EH
Credit card orders incur a 5% surcharge per item.
Business hours : 9.00am to 8.00pm 7 days a week.
PLEASE ALLOW 4 WORKING DAYS FOR CHEQUES TO CLEAR .
ALL ITEMS DESPATCHED AS SOON AS THEY BECOME AVAILABLE.
Feel free to phone if you cannot see what you want.

VISA

'HARDWARE'
(Computer & Consoles add £10.00 P&P - Hand Helds / Accessories add £5.00 P&P)

AMIGA CARTOON CLASSICS PACK Lemmings, Simpsons, Capt Planet, DPaint 3, Tv Modulator.1MB RAM Expansion.	**£369.00**
AMIGA CARTOON CLASSICS PLUS PACK As above plus workbench 2.0 & ECS!!	**£369.00**
PHOENIX ROM SHARER Gives 100% downwards compatability with, Kickstart v1.3 related software. IE: No more compatability problems, Hurray!	**£44.99**
CDTV Lemmings, Hutchinsons Encyclopedia.	**£489.00**
CDTV TRACKBALL	**£75.99**
CDTV KEYBOARD	**£45.99**
ATARI LYNX 1 HAND-HELD CONSOLE California Games, Comlynx Cable, PSU.	**£119.99**
LYNX COMS CABLE	**£9.99**
LYNX PSU	**£13.99**

'AMIGA & CDTV EXTRAS'

PRINTERS (ADD £10.00 P&P)	
MPS 1230 9 PIN DOT MATRIX	£159.99
MPS 1270 INKJET	£139.99
MPS 1550 COLOUR DOT MATRIX	£219.99
MONITORS (ADD £10.00 P&P)	
A1083S STEREO COLOUR	£230.00
1930 VGA COLOUR	£265.99
A21FST 21" FST MULTISYNC	£1999.99
AMIGA MEMORY UPGRADES (ADD £1.00 P&P)	
512K RAM	£29.99
512K RAM + CLOCK	£34.99
1.5MB UNPOPULATED	£34.99
1.5MB POPULATED	£85.99
1 MB MEGABOARD	£54.99
MISCELLANEOUS (ADD £5.00 P&P)	
3.5" EXTERNAL DISK DRIVE	£54.99
AMIGA POWER PACK	£43.99
AMIGA ROC GEN	£135.99
(ADD £3.00 P&P)	
ZY-FI MINI STEREO SPEAKERS	£32.95
A520 TV MODULATOR	£27.99
AMIGA / ATARI TRACKBALL	£32.95
(ADD £1.00 P&P)	
VIRUS PROTECTOR	£6.99
A1352 ORIGINAL AMIGA MOUSE	£34.99
AMIGA / ATARI QUICK MOUSE	£17.99
MOUSE MAT (BLUE)	2.99

☎ 0763 241865

Impressions games are war/strategy games in their truest sense operating on a hex grid, with all the hit-point ratings and defence abilities displayed in their ugly numeric forms, but they are sure to keep happy the gamer who simply wants a machine to do the adding up and look after all the imagination, sound and action in his own head.

☆☆☆

HARD DRIVIN'

Price **Lynx £34.99**
Genre **Racing Simulation**
Publisher **Atari**

The Lynx catalogue of software keeps getting bigger and bigger, and - more importantly - the quality of the games keeps getting better and better. Hard Drivin', a conversion of the Atari coin-op, is a case in point.

Potential buyers expecting or hoping for *Pole Position 3* are going to be disappointed - this is a pretty successful attempt to simulate the controls and performance of a 'real' car, and as such it's slightly more difficult and much less forgiving to drive than yer usual arcade auto.

The action takes place on one of two courses, a Speed Track and a Stunt Track (complete with jumps and loop-theloop). Once these have been tamed the player can try racing against the Photon Phantom.

The graphics and sound are nothing short of incredible, accurately reproducing the look and feel of its coin-op Big Daddy. Along with *S.T.U.N. Runner* this is a real showcase for the power of the Lynx.

It takes a little while to get used to Hard Drivin' on the Lynx - the joypad is a poor substitute for a wheel - making the going tough at first, and some may find the difficulty combined with the lack of immediate pulse-racing thrills boring. However, once the player has got the hang of things they should find Hard Drivin' remarkably satisfying. Recommended.

☆☆☆☆

HARE RASING HAVOC

Price **PC £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Disney/Infogrammes**

Phwoar! The idea of a game based around Who Framed Roger Rabbit's stunning cartoon opening sequence does indeed sound like one tasty prospect - but sadly, Disney has realised little of its great potential in this rather dull little game.

On paper at least, it sounds like the cartoon's outrageously-frenetic spirit has been captured. Roger's been entrusted with looking after the accident-prone Baby Herman, and must ensure nothing happens to him while his dragon-like mother is out of the house. But Herman's disappeared to the local dairy to sample their milky wares, and Roger must track him down before any harm comes to him.

Sounds like fun? Don't let appearances be deceptive. The only thing that Hare Raising Havoc manages to do is infuriate the player beyond measure with its unfriendly control, illogical puzzles and repetetive gameplay.

On each of the screens thar Roger encounters, there's a problem to be solved, which involves manipulating the surrounding scenery and objects . To be honest, it's not very taxing and the player more often finds himself fighting agsinst the unresponsive control and slow, drudgy animation than actually getting to grips with the puzzles. With the Disney Sound Source connected you get samples of the original movie characters' voices and SFX - but these quickly become every bit as annoying as the game itself. Only die-hard Roger Rabbit fans need apply.

☆☆☆

KNIGHTMARE

Price **Amiga £29.99**
Genre **Role-Playing Game**
Publisher **Mindscape**

Knightmare, based on the children's TV series of the same name, can best be described as *Captive* with new graphics. The similarities are hardly surprising - both were written by Tony Crowther, the man who has been responsible for more games than Mr Waddingtons.

And, as anyone who has played *Captive* will realise, this is not such a bad thing. The action is depicted in bitmapped view-down-the-corridor 3D, with the player able to move around the puzzle- and monster-strewn labyrinths with ease. It's not partiuclarly original or ground-breaking, but anyone who enjoys a good RPG - and *Captive*, in particular - will be more than happy with this.

My only aerious quibble is whether kiddy fans of the TV show will find its slightly cerebral nature appealing.

☆☆☆☆

MOONSTONE

Price **Amiga £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Adventure**
Publisher **Mindscape**

What a conundrum this is. While experience suggests that games billed as being at all "zany" should be treated with approximately the same amount of caution as a drunken pit-bull with rabies, Moonstone isn't actually that bad.

The aim of the game is to travel across a mystic land, searching for the Holy Grail-like Moonstone and trying to ensure that no other swine gets his mitts on it first. Up to four players can enter the quest, each selecting a coloured Knight to control. And why, prey tell, are we controlling Knights instead of elves or goblins or something? Because Moonstone is all about fighting, that's why!

At frequent intervals, the frankly tedious travelling sections are punctuated with action scenes. While walking in a wood or dithering by a stone circle, the Knight will be accosted by a hostile creature. Here is where the novelty value of Moonstone lies. The combat is *incredibly* violent and gory. Although the gore can be switched off by squamish gamers.

All in all a mixed bag. It could have been a really great combat game, but there's too much wandering around to give it much instant appeal. Worth a look.

☆☆☆

NEVER-ENDING STORY 2

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Adventure**
Publisher **Linel**

I've nothing against licences being close to their film origins - in fact, I positively endorse it - but when this is taken to such lengths that the game turns out as poor as the movie did then I have to draw the line.

Witness The Never-Ending Story 2. The film came and went at the cinemas with hardly a murmur of public interest, and unfortunately it's likely that the game of the film will suffer the same fate. The fact that the game's release trails that of the film by a good year or so is the final nail in its coffin.

It's a five-level arcade action romp. The first is a *Shadow of the Beast* style horizontal scroller, the second is a 3D chase, the third is a dull climb up the side of a tower, the fourth is a *Nebulus*-style platform affair, the fifth a *Wrath of the Demon*-style horse ride. As you can tell, it's positively sparking with originality. As usually happens with these multi-event games the individual sections are pretty weak in terms of gameplay(though moderately pleasant to look at). They're also quite difficult, and since death is frequent the lengthy gap between lives is particularly frustrating. Although well-presented, Never-Ending Story 2 can only be recommended to die-hard fans of the film. That's right - all three of you.

☆☆

PACMAN

Price **Game Gear £19.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Namco**

Well, what is there to say about the original arcade classic that hasn't already been said? Not much, except that it's now available on the Sega handheld and isn't bad at all.

There are no frills, enhancements or other features that would have been a mistake to add here. This is not Pacman 91 or anything rubbish like that, but the good old original, as it was all those years ago. The conversion is pretty much spot-on (which, given that the game hardly pushes computer technology to its limit is only to be expected), right down to the original colours and sound effects.

One change that has had to be made is purely a practical one - to preserve the original size of the graphics, the Pac-maze is now a four-way scrolling affair, with only a section visible on screen at a time. It works well enough, but it can be a bit of a pain at times, as it makes it difficult for the player to see where the remaining dots are, and where ghosts might be coming in from. Pacman veterans may find this annoying, but to us more casual players it's not too much of a bind. So don't be a

SYSTEM ADDICT

SYSTEM ADDICT (Mail Order)
106A Chilwell Road
Beeston
Nottingham
NG9 1ES

TELEPHONE:
(0602) 678184
(24 Hours)

FAX NUMBER:
(0602) 678185
(24 Hours)

AMIGA & ST

	AM	ST
3D CONSTRUCTION KIT	33.99	26.99
3D POOL	9.99	9.99
A10 TANK KILLER	23.99	N/A
ACTION PACK	17.99	17.99
ADDICTED TO FUN	13.49	13.49
AGONY	17.99	17.99
AIR SUPPORT	17.99	N/A
ALIEN BREED (1Mb)	16.99	N/A
ALTERED DESTINY	20.99	N/A
AMNIOS	17.99	N/A
APB	7.99	7.99
AQUAVENTURA	17.99	N/A
ARMOUR GEDDON	17.99	17.99
ATF2	9.99	9.99
AUSTERLITZ	9.99	9.99
BAAL	7.99	7.99
BARBARIAN 2	17.99	17.99
BATMAN THE MOVIE	7.99	7.99
BEACH VOLLEY	7.99	7.99
BIG DEAL COMP	20.99	20.99
BILL ELLIOTS NASCAR RACING	17.99	N/A
BLOOD MONEY	7.99	7.99
BLOODWYCH	9.99	9.99
BLUE MAX (ACES)	20.99	20.99
BLUES BROTHERS	17.99	17.99
BOSTON BOMB CLUB	17.99	17.99
BREACH 2 (ENHANCED)	20.99	20.99
BRIGADE COMMANDER	17.99	N/A
BUBBLE BOBBLE	7.99	7.99
BUCK ROGERS	20.99	N/A
CABEL	7.99	7.99
CADAVER	17.99	17.99
CADAVER - THE PAYOFF	10.99	10.99
CALIFORNIA GAMES	7.99	7.99
CAPTAIN PLANET	17.99	17.99
CAPTAIN FIZZ	7.99	7.99
CARRIER COMMAND	9.99	9.99
CARTHAGE	19.99	13.49
CHALLENGE GOLF	16.99	16.99
CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN 1 Mb	20.99	N/A
CHAOS IN ANDROMEDA	16.99	N/A
CHAOS STRIKES BACK (1Mb)	17.99	17.99
CHART ATTACK (COMP)	20.99	20.99
CHE-GUERILLA IN BOLIVIA	16.99	N/A
CISCO HEAT	17.99	17.99
CJs ELEPHANT ANTICS	6.99	6.99
CLASSIC 4	7.99	7.99
CONFLICT IN EUROPE	9.99	9.99
CONQUEROR	7.99	7.99
CORPORATION & MISSION DISK	17.99	17.99
CRUISE FOR A CORSE	18.99	17.99
CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS 1Mb	20.99	20.99
DE LUXE PAINT 4	61.99	N/A
DEATH KNIGHTS OF KRYNN	20.99	N/A
DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	9.99	9.99
DEVIOUS DESIGNS	17.99	17.99
DOUBLE DOUBLE BILL	24.99	N/A
DOUBLE DRAGON	7.99	7.99
DRAGON NINJA	7.99	7.99
DUNGEON MASTER 1Mb	17.99	17.99
ELF (OCEAN)	16.99	16.99
ELITE	17.99	17.99
ELVIRA (1 Mb)	19.99	19.99
ELIRA 2	19.99	19.99
EXILE	17.99	17.99
EYE OF THE BEHOLDER	20.99	N/A
F15 STRIKE EAGLE 2	23.99	23.99
F19 STEALTH FIGHTER	20.99	20.99
FALCON CLASSIC COLLECTION	24.99	20.99
FANTASY WORLD DIZZY	6.99	6.99
FAST FOOD DIZZY	6.99	6.99
FEDERATION OF FREE TRADERS	9.99	9.99
FIGHTER COMMAND	20.49	20.49
FIRST SAMURAI	17.99	17.99
FLIGHT SIM 2	23.99	25.99
FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER	23.99	23.99
FLOOD	10.99	10.99
FOOTBALL DIRECTOR 2	13.49	13.49
FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR 2	7.99	7.99
FORMULA 1 3D	17.99	N/A
FORT APACHE	20.49	20.49
FULL CONTACT	9.99	N/A
FUN SCHOOL 2 (6-8)	14.49	14.49
FUN SCHOOL 2 (8+)	14.49	14.49
FUN SCHOOL 2 (>6)	14.49	14.49
FUN SCHOOL 3 (UND 5)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 3 (5-7)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 3 (7+)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 4 (UNDER 5s)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 4 (5 TO 7s)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 4 (7 TO 11s)	16.99	16.99
GAMES SUMMER EDITION	7.99	7.99
GAUNTLET 2	7.99	7.99
GODS	17.99	17.99
GP TENNIS MANAGER	17.99	N/A
HEROES OF THE LANCE	17.49	17.49
HEROQUEST	17.99	17.99
HITCHHIKERS GUIDE	9.99	9.99
HUNTER	20.99	20.99
IAN BOTHAMS CRICKET	20.99	20.99
INDY JONES LAST CRUSADE	7.99	7.99
INTELLIGENT STRATEGY GAMES	16.99	16.99
INTERECEPTOR	10.99	N/A
INTERNATIONAL KARATE +	7.99	7.99
IRON LORD	9.99	9.99
ITALIA 1990	4.99	4.99
JACK NICKLAUS GOLF	N/A	17.49
J NICKLAUS UNLIMITED GOLF 1	20.99	N/A
J NICKLAUS COURSES V1-4	8.99	N/A
J NICKLAUS COURSE V5	10.49	N/A
JAMES BOND COLLECTION	16.99	16.99
JIMMY WHITES SNOOKER	20.99	20.99
KICK OFF 2	13.99	13.99
KICK OFF 2 1Mb	17.99	N/A
KICK OFF EUROPE	7.99	N/A
KICK OFF EXTRA TIME	7.99	7.99
KICK OFF2/FINAL WHISTLE	8.99	8.99
KING OF CHICAGO	9.99	9.99
KNIGHTMARE	20.99	20.99
LAST NINJA 3	17.99	17.99
LEANDER	20.99	N/A
LEMMINGS	17.99	17.99
LEMMINGS DATA DISK	13.49	13.49
LIFE AND DEATH	17.99	17.99
LOMBARD RAC RALLY	7.99	7.99
LORD OF THE RINGS	20.99	N/A
LOTUS ESPRIT	17.49	17.49
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2	17.99	17.99
MAD DOG WILLIAMS	20.49	20.49
MAGIC POCKETS	17.99	17.99
MAGIC STORY BOOK	20.99	20.99
MAGNETIC SCROLLS COMP. 1	20.99	20.99
MANCHESTER UNITED EUROPE	17.99	17.99
MAUPITY ISLAND	20.49	20.49
MAVIS BEACON TYPING	20.99	20.99
MEAN MACHINE	7.99	7.99
MEGA LO MANIA	20.99	17.99
MEGATRAVELLER 1	20.99	20.99
MENACE	7.99	7.99
MERCENARY 3	20.49	20.49
MIAMI CHASE	7.99	7.99
MIDWINTER 2	23.99	23.99
MIG-29M SUPER FULCRUM	27.49	27.49
MIG29 SUPER FULCRUM	27.49	26.99
MONOPOLY DELUXE	18.49	N/A
MOONSTONE	20.99	N/A
MOONWALKER	7.99	7.99
MULTIPLAYER SOCCER MANAGER	17.99	N/A
NAPOLEON 1	20.99	20.99
NEBULUS 2	17.99	N/A
NEW ZEALAND STORY	7.99	7.99
NINJA RABBITS	7.14	7.14
NORTH AND SOUTH	7.99	7.99
OBITUS	23.99	17.99
ONSLAUGHT	9.99	9.99
OPERATION WOLF	7.99	7.99
ORK	17.99	N/A
OUT RUN	7.99	7.99
PEGASUS	17.99	N/A
PGA TOUR GOLF	17.99	N/A
PLAYER MANAGER	13.99	13.99
POOLS OF RADIANCE 1Mb	20.99	N/A
POWER UP	20.99	20.99
POWERMONGER	20.99	20.99
PREDATOR 2	17.49	17.49
PRO BOXING SIMULATOR	7.99	7.99
PRO TENNIS TOUR 2	17.99	17.49
PROFLIGHT	27.49	27.49
R-TYPE	7.99	7.99
RAILROAD TYCOON (ST 1Mb)	23.99	23.99
RALLY CROSS	4.99	4.99
RBI2 BASEBALL	20.99	20.99
REACH FOR THE SKIES	23.99	20.99
REALTHINGS - SAFARI	20.99	N/A
RED HEAT	7.99	7.99
RETURN OF THE WITCHLORDS	10.49	10.49
RISE OF THE DRAGON	23.99	N/A
ROBIN HOOD	17.99	N/A
ROBOZONE	17.99	17.99
ROCKET RANGER	9.99	9.99
RODLAND	17.99	17.99
ROLLING RONNY	16.99	16.99
RUGBY THE WORLD CUP	16.99	16.99
SCOOBY DOO/SCRAPPY DOO	7.99	7.99
SECRETS OF MONKEY ISLAND 1M	17.99	N/A
SECRETS OF SLIVER BLADE 1Mb	20.99	N/A
SHADOW OF THE BEAST	7.99	7.99
SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2	17.99	17.99
SHINOBI	7.99	7.99
SILENT SERVICE 2	23.99	N/A
SILKWORM	7.99	7.99
SIM CITY/POPULOUS	20.99	20.99
SINBAD	9.99	9.99
SPEEDBALL	9.99	9.99
SPEEDBALL 2	17.99	17.99
SPIRIT OF EXCALIBUR	20.49	20.99
SPOT	13.49	13.49
STARFLIGHT 2	17.99	N/A
STARGLIDER 2	9.99	9.99
STARTEGO	16.99	16.99
STRIKER MANAGER	16.99	16.99
STRIP POKER 2 (DATA DISK 1)	7.99	7.99
STRIP POKER DE LUXE	9.99	9.99
SUPAPLEX	17.99	17.99
SUPER CARS	7.99	7.99
SUPER HANG ON	7.99	7.99
SUPER HEROES COMP	20.99	20.99
SUPER SPACE INVADERS	16.99	16.99
SWAP	17.99	N/A
SWIV	17.49	17.49
TEENAGE TURTLES	9.99	9.99
TERMINATOR 2	17.99	17.99
TEST DRIVE 2 COMPILATION	20.99	N/A
THE GOLD RUSH COLLECTION	17.99	17.99
THE JAMES BOND COLLECTION	16.99	16.99
THE SHOE PEOPLE	17.99	17.99
THEIR FINEST HOUR	20.99	20.99
THEIR FINEST MISSIONS	10.99	10.99
THREE STOOGES	9.99	9.99
THUNDERHAWK	20.99	20.99
THUNDERJAWS	16.99	16.99
TINTIN ON THE MOON	7.99	7.99
TOKI	16.99	16.99
TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY	4.99	4.99
TURBO OUTRUN	7.99	7.99
TURTLES ARCADE	20.99	17.99
TV SPORTS FOOTBALL	9.99	9.99
ULTIMA 6	20.99	20.99
UMS 2 NATIONS WAR 1Mb	20.99	20.99
UTOPIA	20.99	20.99
VIRTUAL REALITY	23.99	20.99
WATERLOO	9.99	9.99
WINGS 1Mb	20.99	N/A
WINNING TACTICS	7.99	7.99
WOLFPACK 1Mb	20.99	17.99
WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	7.99	7.99
XENON 2	9.99	9.99
WWF	17.99	17.99

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

	3.5"	5.25"
3D CONSTRUCTION KIT	DUAL	33.99
4D SPORTS BOXING	DUAL	20.99
4D SPORTS DRIVING	DUAL	20.99
688 SUB ATTACK	DUAL	20.99
A10 TANK KILLER (ENHANCED)	DUAL	26.99
ACTION STATIONS	DUAL	26.99
ARACNOPOBIA	DUAL	17.99
ATF2	9.99	9.99
ATP	26.99	26.99
AUSTERLITZ	9.99	9.99
BAAL	9.99	9.99
BIG BOX	23.99	23.99
BILL ELLIOT NASCAR CHALLENG	24.49	24.49
BLOODWYCH	26.99	26.99
BLUES BROTHERS	17.99	17.99
BOSTON BOMB CLUB	17.99	17.99
BREACH 2 (ENHANCED)	20.49	20.49
CADAVER	24.49	24.49
CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN	20.99	20.99
CASTLES	23.99	23.99
CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE	20.49	20.49
CHESS CHAMPION 2175	20.49	20.49
CHESSMASTER 2100	DUAL	17.99
CHESSMASTER 3000	24.49	24.49
CHUCK YEAGER COMBAT	23.99	23.99
CISCO HEAT	17.99	17.99
COLOSSUS BRIDGE 4	13.99	13.99
COLOSSUS CHESS 4	17.99	17.99
CONFLICT MIDDLE EAST	24.99	24.99
CORPORATION	23.99	23.99
DEATHS KNIGHTS OF KRYNN	20.99	20.99
DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	9.99	9.99
DELUXE SCRABBLE	DUAL	16.99
DUNGEON MASTER	26.99	26.99
ELITE PLUS	26.99	26.99
ELVIRA	27.99	27.99
EXOTIC CAR SHOWROOM	DUAL	13.99
EYE OF THE BEHOLDER	20.99	20.99
F15 STRIKE EAGLE 2	24.49	24.49
F117A NIGHTHAWK	26.99	26.99
FALCON V3.0	33.99	33.99
FLIGHT SIM 4 ADD ON	DUAL	23.99
FLIGHT SIMULTOR 4	35.99	35.99
HAWAIIAN SECENERY	12.99	12.99
JAPANESE SECENERY	12.99	12.99
SECENERY 7,9,11,12	12.99	12.99
FUN SCHOOL 3 (UNDER 5)	12.99	12.99
FUN SCHOOL 3 (5-7)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 3 (OVER 7)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 4 (UNDER 5)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 4 (5 TO 7)	16.99	16.99
FUN SCHOOL 4 (5 TO 11)	16.99	16.99
GUNSHIP 2000	25.99	25.99
HEART OF CHINA (VGA)/(EGA)	27.99	27.99
HITCHICKERS GUIDE	DUAL	9.99
IAN BOTHA	DUAL	20.49
IMMORTAL	20.49	N/A
INDY JONES LAST CRUSADE	7.99	7.99
INTELLIGENT STRATEGY GAMES	20.49	20.49
IRON LORD	9.99	9.99
JACK NICKLAUS UNLIMITED GOL	27.99	27.99
COURSES VOL 1,2,3,4	8.99	8.99
COURSES VOL 5	10.49	10.49
JET FIGHTER 2	DUAL	27.49
KICK OFF 2	17.49	17.49
KID WORKS CREATIVITY KIT	DUAL	27.49
KILLING CLOUD	24.49	24.49
KING OF CHICAGO	9.99	9.99
KINGS QUEST 4	DUAL	27.99
KINGS QUEST 5 (EGA)	DUAL	27.99
KINGS QUEST 5 (HD) (VGA)	31.49	31.49
LEATHER GOODESS	DUAL	9.99
LEMMINGS	DUAL	23.99
LEMMINGS DATA DISK	10.99	10.99
LETS SPELL AT HOME	16.99	16.99
LETS SPELL AT THE SHOPS	16.99	16.99
LETS SPELL OUT AND ABOUT	16.99	16.99
LINKS	28.99	28.99
BAYHILL DISK	12.49	12.49
BOUNTIFUL DISK	123.49	12.49
FIRESTONE DISK	12.49	12.49
PINEHURST DISK	12.49	12.49
LONE WOLF	DUAL	16.99
MAD DOG WILLIAMS	23.99	23.99
MAGNETIC SCROLLS COMP	DUAL	24.49
MARTIAN DREAMS (HD)/(LD)	25.49	25.49
MAVIS BEACON 2 (WIN 3.0)	DUAL	24.49
MAVIS BEACON 2	DUAL	24.49
MEGA FORTRESS (LD)	24.49	24.49
MEGA FORTRESS HD	24.49	24.49
MEGATRAVELLER 2	24.49	24.49
MENACE	9.99	9.99
MERCHANT COLONY	23.99	23.99
MIRCO ENGLISH (GCSE)	DUAL	16.49
MICRO FRENCH (GCSE)	DUAL	16.49
MIG 29M SUPER FULCRUM	DUAL	30.49
MIGHT AND MAGIC 3	27.99	27.99
MIKE DITKAS ULTIMATE FBALL	23.99	23.99
MONKEY ISLAND	20.99	20.99
NORTH AND SOUTH	7.99	7.99
OBITUS	23.99	23.99
OUTRUN	7.99	7.99
PENTHOUSE JIGSAW	DUAL	23.99
PENTHOUSE JIGSAW 18+	DUAL	23.99
PERSONAL PRO	DUAL	26.99
PGA TOUR GOLF	20.49	20.49
POOL OF DARKNESS (HD)	20.99	20.99
POWERMONGER	20.49	20.49
REACH FOR THE SKIES	24.49	24.49
RIDERS OF ROHAN	24.49	24.49
ROBIN HOOD	DUAL	20.99
ROCKET RANGER	9.99	9.99
ROLLING RONNY	DUAL	20.49
UMS 2 NATIONS WAR	27.99	27.99
SCROOGE, A CHRISTMAS CAROL	15.49	15.49
SECRETS OF THE SILVER BLADE	20.99	20.99
SECRET WEAPONS OF LUFTWAFFE	27.99	27.99
SHINOBI	DUAL	7.99
SILENT SERVICE 2	24.49	24.49
SIM CITY/POPULOUS	23.99	23.99
SIM EARTH	DUAL	27.99
SPACE QUEST 1 (VGA)	26.99	26.99
SPACE QUEST 2	DUAL	24.49
SPACE QUEST 3	DUAL	27.99
SPACE QUEST 4 (EGA)/(VGA HD)	27.99	27.99
SPACE WRECKED	DUAL	20.49
SPEECH ACCESS PACK (HD)	12.49	12.49
SPEECH ACCESS PACK (LD)	12.49	12.49
SPEEDBALL	9.99	9.99
SPEEDBALL 2	24.49	24.49
SPEEDBALL 2 EGA/VGA	24.49	24.49
SPELLCASTING 201	DUAL	26.99
SPOT	DUAL	10.99
STARGLIDER 2	9.99	9.99
SUPER CAR PAK	DUAL	23.99
SUPER SPACE INVADERS	DUAL	20.49
TEAM SUZUKI	DUAL	20.49
TERMINATOR 2	DUAL	20.49
THE GAMES WINTER EDITION	DUAL	23.99
THEIR FINEST HOUR	20.99	20.99
THEIR FINEST MISSIONS	10.99	10.99
TINTIN ON THE MOON	7.99	7.99
TURTLES ARCADE	20.49	20.49
TV SPORTS BASEBALL	20.49	20.49
TV SPORTS BOXING	24.49	24.49
TV SPORTS ROLLERBABES	24.49	24.49
UTIMA 7	26.99	26.99
VIRTUAL REALITY	23.99	23.99
WATERLOO	9.99	9.99
WEST EURO SCENERY	12.49	12.49
WESTERN FRONT	23.99	23.99
WING COMM2 SPEECH PACK HD	10.99	10.99
WING COMM2 SPEECH PACK LD	10.99	10.99
WING COMMMANDER 2 (HD)	26.99	26.99
WING COMMANDER 2 (LD)	26.90	26.99
WING COMMANDER2 HD	26.99	26.99
WING COMMANDER2 LD	26.99	26.99
WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	7.99	7.99
WRECKERS	DUAL	20.49
XENON 2	9.99	9.99

ORDER DETAILS:

All prices are inclusive of VAT and p&p. Errors and omittions execpted. For orders under £5.00 please add 50p. Not all titles are released at time of going to press. Forward orders will be despatched within 24 hours by first class post subject to availability. Please allow up to 28 days for completion of order.

PAYMENT DETAILS:

Credit card orders: Please state the type of card, account number, expiry date and full name on the card. Payment will only be taken when goods are despatched. Most major credit/charge cards accepted. Please make cheques and postal orders payable to "System Addict" and write your name, address and cheque guarantee card details on the reverse of each cheque. We reserve the right to allow cheques to clear before orders are despatched.

The above is only a sample of the software available through System Addict, if the title you require is not listed then please ring for details.

We also stock software for Spectrum, C64, Amstrad, Megadrive, Master System, Game Boy, Lynx, NES, Super Famicom.

silly boy - get this classic up and running on your GameGear today!

☆☆☆☆

PUT 'N' PUTTER

Price **Game Gear £29.99**
Genre **Puzzle**
Publisher **Import**

There's nothing like a good crazy golf game for a bit of handheld entertainment. And, as they say, this is nothing like a good crazy golf game.

Well, okay, so that's not strictly the case, but Put n' Putter is seriously flawed.

The major, indeed the only, real problem with the game is that it is simply far too easy. And by easy I mean the player (unless he's an utter imbecile) won't even get a whiff of a *Continue (Y/N)* screen until he has completed about twenty holes and has graduated onto the Expert level. While it's nice to get a little way into a game before grinding to a halt, this is ridiculous!

Aside from this, Put n' Putter does all the things a crazy golf game should, falling down in only a couple of minor places. The cursor moves rather sluggishly, and the courses could hardly be described as innovative. Worth a look if you're a really crap golfer.

☆☆

REALMS

Price **Amiga/Atari ST £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Strategy**
Publisher **Virgin Games**

Good grief! Just what, as *Amiga Power* so aptly put it, has Peter '*Populous*' Molyneux started. Yes, it's him and his merry band of programmers at Bullfrog who we have we have to blame for the proliferation of isometric-3D view strategy games.

It's timing that's the biggestproblem with Realms, the latest offering from Graftgold, previously best known for arcade games like *Paradroid 90* and *Rainbow Islands*. If it had appeared about four months ago, it might be recieved more favourably. But in the last few months we've had *Mega-lo-Mania*, *Utopia* and the sequel to the game that strated it all *Populous 2* (which rightly blew the competition away).One can't help feeling the software-buying public have probably had enough of these sorts of games by now, and if I had the choice between *Populous 2* and *Realms*, I know which one I'd go for.

The pity is that Realms is actually quite a good game. The player is a warlord in a pseudo-fantasy world, vying for power with a number of other equally power-mad warriors. The player tax his people, raise armies, lay siege to cities, the usual sort of thing. Imagine *Powermonger* with more depth but less impressive graphics and you get the rough idea. It plays well, control over the various components of your empire is well thought out, and the mix of strategy and action is balanced nicely. Trouble is, when you've been a God raining fire and brimstone on your people Realms comes across as Earthbound in every sense.

☆☆☆☆

ROBOCOP 2

Price **Game Boy £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Import**

Hmm. A bit of an oddity this one. While the graphics are bigger and chunkier than before and the storyline follows the second movie as opposed to the first, you can't help but feel that you really have seen this all before.

The main problem lies with the best that Robocop 2 won't scroll backwards. This makes the supposed exploration of the various factories and warehouses in the game a bit farcical, since Robo can only explore the location which he comes to next.

Learning the pattern of hostages to be rescued, nuke to be destroyed and criminals to book will help, but it hardly solves the problem.

Still, it looks great and the sound effect and music are excellent. And let's face it, if you're going to get yourself a shoot-em'-up as a New Year treat, it's best to stick with the name you know.

☆☆☆

SHUTTLE

Price **IBM PC £49.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Virgin Games**

Not for the faint hearted, this one. As you've probably guessed, it's a simulation of the Space Shuttle. And the word 'rigourous' just doesn't even begin to do justice to the level of accuracy that developers Vektor Grafix have achieved. The cockpit is bewildering - all the player can see is bank upon bank of knobs, dials and levers, most of which work and have some effect.

The player not only has to fly the damn thing, he has to open up the bay doors and control the robot arms to deploy satellites and so forth. And this technical accuracy is backed up by some of the best 3D graphics ever seen. There's even a realistically and accurately mapped planet Earth that rotates and the star constellations are all plotted correctly as well.

As stunning an achivement as Shuttle is, the biggest problem with it is its limited appeal. Personally I think it's brilliant and completely absorbing, but I can understand that there might be some people who find the idea of twiddling all those dials more than a little off-putting. If that's because of the sheer daunting complexity of the whole thing then that shouldn't be a problem, because there's a whole range of player aids that make the game accessible to everybody, no matter what their sim proficiency. But there's no getting away from the fact that if your patience with sims ends at *Thunderhawk*, then you're likely to find little to interest you here.

☆☆☆☆

SLIDERS

Price **Game Gear £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Import**

Jesus, Mary and Joseph! What are Loriciel trying to force upon us now! In the wake of the global mania for puzzle games, it seems that any old rubbish will do these days. Here we have Slider, a fat yellow thing who must trundle around a selection of mazes doing his utmost not to bump into the bad guys. Once Slider has travelled over, and therefore coloured in, each square in the maze, he moves onto the next.

Later mazes are made more hazardous by sliding platforms which will propel Slider into deadly situations.

A time limit prevents the player from being able to dawdle, or maybe consider his next move, and there are lots of squares which simply kill off Slider on contact. Terrific.

Far from being the sort of game to while away many a train journey, Slider is a pain in the arse of the first order, and deserves a place in absolutely no-one's software collection..

☆

STEVE MCQUEEN - WESTPHASER

Price **Amiga £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Loriciels**

You what?! Talk about a cynical licence! Not only is the poor chap dead and unable to defend himself against this sort of thing, but this game actually bears no relevance to the great man at all! Okay, so he was in a few cowboy films, and this is a cowboy game, but there the similarity ends. Don't expect to see any of Steve in the game - his involvement begins and ends with a tacky black and white picture on the box.

It gets weirder still. Because it has the word Westphaser in the title, you'd assume it's compatible with the Westphaser light gun. But oh, no. It's conventional mouse, keyboard or joystick control only. Just what on Earth is going on here?

Alright, so it's all very dodgy so far, but what of the game itself? Well, unfortunately things don't get much better here either, as what's on offer is a bog-standard Operation Wolf-style shootout set in a variety of typically Wild West scenarios. That might sound like at least a bit of a laugh, but the action is so stunted and dull that it's difficult to get even vaguely excited. To be fair, the graphics are quite nice in a funny French sort of way and there are some jolly touches (you can shoot the dresses off the women, for example), but it's hardly enough to justify financial outlay. Is that Steve himself I hear spinning in his grave?

☆☆

SUPAPLEX

Price **Amiga/ST/PC £25.99**
Genre **Puzzle Game**
Publisher **Digital Integration**

"You're Murphy, bug-hunter extraordinaire, exploring deep inside a crazy computer. Snik Snaks must be avoid-

SOFTWARE CITY

Unit 4, B.D.C., 21 Temple Street, Wolverhampton. WV2 4AN.
Tel: 0902 25304. Fax : 0902 712751

CALL US ON : 24 HOUR CREDIT CARD HOTLINE 0902 25304

ATARI ST & AMIGA GAMES

	ST	AM
3-D CONSTRUCTION KIT	27.99	34.99
4-D SPORTS BOXING	N.A	17.50
A.P.B.	7.99	7.99
ADVANCED FRUIT MACHINE	6.99	6.99
ALIEN BREED	N.A	17.50
ALIEN STORM **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
ALTERED BEAST	7.99	7.99
AMNIOS	N.A	17.50
ARMALYTE	17.50	17.50
AUSTERLITZ	9.99	9.99
BABY JOE GO HOME **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
BATMAN THE MOVIE	7.99	7.99
BATTLE CHESS	17.50	17.50
BATTLE CHESS 2	N.A	17.50
BATTLE ISLE **(NEW)**	N.A	21.50
BATTLE OF BRITAIN (THEIR FINEST HOUR)	21.50	21.50
BATTLE OF BRITAIN MISSION DISC	10.99	10.99
BEACH VOLLEY	7.99	7.99
BEAST BUSTERS	17.50	17.50
BLOOD MONEY	7.99	7.99
BLOODWYCH	9.99	9.99
BOSTON BOMB CLUB **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
BREACH 2 ENHANCED	21.50	21.50
BUBBLE BOBBLE	7.99	7.99
BUDOKAN	N.A	9.99
BUILDERLAND	13.99	13.99
CABAL	7.99	7.99
CALIFORNIA GAMES	7.99	7.99
CAPTAIN PLANET	17.50	17.50
CARRIER COMMAND	9.99	9.99
CENTREFOLD SQUARES	9.99	9.99
CHASE H.Q. **(NEW PRICE)**	7.99	7.99
CHE **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
CHESS CHAMPION 2175	21.50	21.50
CHUCK ROCK	17.50	17.50
CHUCKIE EGG 1 OR 2	9.99	9.99
CISCO HEAT **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
COHORT FIGHTING FOR ROME	21.50	21.50
COLOSSUS CHESS 10	9.99	9.99
CONFLICT EUROPE	9.99	9.99
CONQUEROR	7.99	7.99
CORPORATION + MISSION DISC	17.50	17.50
CRICKET (1 MEG ONLY)	N.A	21.50
CRICKET CAPTAIN	17.50	17.50
CRUISE FOR A CORPS	17.50	19.99
CYBERBALL	7.99	7.99
DAILY DOUBLE HORSE RACING	9.99	9.99
DALEY THOMPSONS OLYMPIC CHALL	7.99	7.99
DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	9.99	9.99
DEGAS ELITE	17.50	N.A
DELUXE SCRABBLE	13.99	13.99
DELUXE PAINT	41.99	N.A
DELUXE PAINT 4	N.A	55.99
DELUXE STRIP POKER 2 (1 MEG) **(NEW**	N.A	17.50
DEUTEROS **(NEW)**	21.50	21.50
DOUBLE DRAGON **(NEW PRICE)**	9.99	9.99
DOUBLE DRAGON 3 **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
DRAGON NINJA	7.99	7.99
E-MOTION **(SPECIAL OFFER)**	N.A	3.99
ELITE	17.50	17.50
ELVIRA ARCADE **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
EMLYN HUGHES INT SOCCER**(SPEC OFFER)**	9.99	9.99
EUROPEAN SUPER LEAGUE**(SPEC OFFER)**	9.99	9.99
EXILE	17.50	17.50
EYE OF THE BEHOLDER	N.A	21.50
F15 STRIKE EAGLE 2	24.99	24.99
F16 COMBAT PILOT	17.50	17.50
F19 STEALTH	21.50	21.50
F29 RETALIATOR	17.50	17.50
FACE OFF (ICE HOCKEY MANAGEMENT)	17.50	17.50
FAST FOOD	6.99	6.99
FINAL BLOW BOXING	17.50	17.50
FINAL FIGHT	17.50	17.50
FINAL WHISTLE	8.99	8.99
FIRST SAMURAI **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER	24.99	24.99
FLIMBO'S QUEST **(SPECIAL OFFER)**	6.99	N.A
FOOTBALL DIRECT. 2**(1 MEG NEW VERS)**	17.50	17.50
FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR 2	7.99	7.99
FOUR WHEEL DRIVE **(NEW)**	21.50	21.50
FRUIT MACHINE	6.99	6.99
FUN SCHOOL 3 (U 5)	17.50	17.50
FUN SCHOOL 3 5-7 YEARS	17.50	17.50
FUN SCHOOL 3 7+	17.50	17.50
FUN SCHOOL 4 (U5) **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
FUN SCHOOL 4 (5-7) **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
FUN SCHOOL 4 (7-11) **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
FUTURE BASKETBALL(**SPEC OFFER)**	N.A	9.99
FUZZBALL **(NEW)**	N.A	13.99
GAMES SUMMER EDITION	7.99	7.99
GAUNTLET 3 **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
GEISHA	17.50	17.50
GODS	17.50	17.50
GOLDERN AXE	17.50	17.50
HEAD OVER HEELS	7.99	7.99
HEIMDALL **(NEW)**	N.A	24.99
HERO QUEST	17.50	17.50
HERO QUEST DATA DISC	10.99	10.99
HOME ALONE **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
HORSE RACING (OMNIPLAY) **(SPECOFF)**	N.A	12.99
HUNTER	21.50	21.50
IMMORTAL	9.99	9.99
IMPOSSAMOLE	7.99	7.99
INDI. JONES LAST CRUSADE **(ACTION)**	7.99	7.99
JACK NICKLAUS UNLIMITED COURSES (1 MEG)	N.A	21.50
JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER	21.50	21.50
KENNY DALGLISH MANAGER	7.99	7.99
KICK OFF 2 **(SPECIAL OFFER)**	9.99	9.99
KICK OFF 2 (1 MEG)	N.A	12.99
KICK OFF 2 THE FINAL WHISTLE	8.99	8.99
KICK OFF 2 RETURN TO EUROPE	7.99	7.99
KICK OFF 2 WINNING TACTICS ADD ON.	7.99	7.99
KLAX	7.99	7.99
KNIGHTMARE **(NEW)**	N.A	21.50
KNIGHTS OF THE SKY **(NEW)**	N.A	24.99
LAST NINJA 3	N.A	17.50
LAZER SQUAD **(SPECIAL OFFER)**	9.99	9.99
LEANDER **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS	9.99	9.99
LEMMINGS	17.50	17.50
LEMMINGS DATA DISC **(NEW)**	N.A	13.99
LEMMINGS (OH NO MORE) LEMMS + DATA	N.A	17.50
LIFE AND DEALTH	17.50	17.50
LITTLE PUFF	6.99	6.99
LOMBARD R.A.C. RALLY	7.99	7.99
LORD OF THE RINGS	N.A	21.50
LORDS OF CHAOS**(SPECIAL OFFER)**	9.99	9.99
LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE	17.50	17.50
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2 **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
M1 TANK PLATOON	21.50	21.50
MAGIC POCKETS	17.50	17.50
MAN. UNT.	17.50	17.50
MAN. UNT. EUROPE	17.50	17.50
MEGA-LO-MANIA	17.50	21.50
MEGA TRAVELLER 1	21.50	21.50
MICROPROSE GOLF **(NEW)**	24.99	24.99
MIDWINTER 2	24.99	24.99
MIG 29 SUPER FULCRUM	27.99	27.99
MOONSTONE **(NEW)**	N.A	21.50
MOONWALKER	7.99	7.99
MULTI PLAYER SOCCER MANAGER	17.50	17.50
NAPOLEON 1	21.50	21.50
NAPOLEONIC BATTLE **(NEW)**	21.50	21.50
NEBULUS 2	N.A	17.50
NEIGHBOURS **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
NEW ZEALAND STORY	7.99	7.99
NIGHTBREED (THE ACTION GAME)	N.A	9.99
NORTH AND SOUTH	7.99	7.99
ONSLAUGHT **(NEW PRICE)**	9.99	9.99
OPERATION WOLF	7.99	7.99
OUTRUN	7.99	7.99
OUTRUN EUROPA	17.50	17.50
P.G.A. TOUR GOLF	N.A	17.50
PEGASUS	N.A	17.50
PIT FIGHTER **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
PLAYER MANAGER	13.99	13.99
POPULOUS	9.99	9.99
POPULOUS/SIM CITY	21.50	21.50
POPULOUS PROMISED LANDS	5.99	5.99
POWERDRIFT	7.99	7.99
POWERMONGER	21.50	21.50
PRINCE OF PERSIA	17.50	17.50
PRO BOXING SIM	7.99	7.99
PRO FLIGHT SIM	27.99	27.99
PRO TENNIS TOUR 2	17.50	17.50
QUEST FOR GLORY 2	N.A	27.99
QUESTION OF SPORT	9.99	9.99
R.B.I. 2	21.50	21.50
R-TYPE	7.99	7.99
R-TYPE 2	17.50	17.50
RAILROAD TYCOON (1 MEG)	24.99	24.99
REALMS **(NEW)**	21.50	21.50
RED HEAT	7.99	7.99
ROBIN HOOD (ADVENTURE)	17.50	17.50
ROBIN SMITHS INTERNAT. CRICKET	17.50	17.50
ROBOCOD **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
ROCKET RANGER	9.99	9.99
RODLANDS	17.50	17.50
RORKE'S DRIFT	17.50	17.50
RUGBY COACH **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
RUGBY WORLD CUP	N.A	17.50
RULES OF ENGAGEMENT	N.A	17.50
RUN THE GAUNTLET	7.99	7.99
SCOOBY DOO AND SCRAPPY DOO	7.99	7.99
SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND (1 MEG)	17.50	17.50
SHADOW OF THE BEAST	7.99	7.99
SHAD OF BEAST (PSYGNOSIS) **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
SHADOW SORCEROR	19.99	19.99
SHINOBI **(NEW PRICE)**	9.99	9.99
SHOOT 'EM CONSTRUCTION KIT	8.99	N.A
SHUFFLEPACK CAFE	7.99	7.99
SILENT SERVICE 2 **(NEW)**	17.50	24.99
SILKWORM **(NEW PRICE)**	9.99	9.99
SIM CITY/ POPULOUS	21.50	21.50
SIMPSONS **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
SMASH T.V. **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
SOCCER MATCH	7.99	7.99
SPEEDBALL	9.99	9.99
SPEEDBALL 2 **(SPECIAL OFFER)**	N.A	9.99
SPIRIT OF EXCALIBUR	21.50	N.A
STACK UP	7.99	7.99
STARGLIDER 2 **(NEW PRICE)**	9.99	9.99
STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER	9.99	9.99
STRIKE FLEET	17.50	17.50
STRIKER MANAGER	17.50	17.50
STUNT CAR RACER **(NEW)**	7.99	7.99
SUPER CARS	7.99	7.99
SUPER CARS 2	17.50	17.50
SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX	17.50	17.50
SUPER OFF ROAD RACER	17.50	17.50
SUPER SPACE INVADERS	17.50	17.50
SUSPICIOUS CARGO **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
SWITCHBLADE	7.99	7.99
SWITCHBLADE 2	17.50	17.50
TEENAGE - TURTLES **(SPECIAL OFFER)**	6.99	N.A
TENNIS CUP	7.99	7.99
TERMINATOR 2	17.50	17.50
TETRIS	13.99	13.99
THEIR FINEST HOUR	21.50	21.50
THEIR FINEST MISSIONS	10.99	10.99
THUNDERBLADE	7.99	7.99
THUNDERHAWK	21.50	21.50
TIP OFF **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
TITANIC BLINKY	7.99	7.99
TOKI	17.50	17.50
TOOBIN	7.99	7.99
TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY	4.99	4.99
TRIVIAL PURSUIT	13.99	13.99
TURBO OUTRUN	7.99	7.99
TURF FORM/SYSTEM 8(HORSE & POOLS)	9.99	9.99
TURRICAN	7.99	7.99
TURRICAN 2	17.50	17.50
T.V. SPORTS FOOTBALL	9.99	9.99
TYPHOON OF STEEL (1 MEG) **(SPECIAL OFFER)**	N.A	9.99
UNDER PRESSURE **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
UTOPIA	21.50	21.50
VOLIFIED **(NEW)**	N.A	17.50
WAR ZONE	13.99	13.99
WILD WHEELS	17.50	17.50
WINGS OF FURY	7.99	7.99
WINNING TACTICS	7.99	7.99
WOLF PACK	17.50	N.A
WONDERLAND	N.A	21.50
WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	7.99	7.99
WORLD CLASS RUGBY **(NEW)**	17.50	17.50
WORLD CRICKET	7.99	7.99
W.W.F. WRESTLING	17.50	17.50
X-OUT **(NEW PRICE)**	7.99	17.50
XENON 2	9.99	9.99
ZORK 1 OR 2 OR 3	9.99	9.99

SIXTEEN BIT COMPILATIONS

★ GRANDSTAND★
World Class Leaderboard, Pro Tennis Tour, Continental Circus & Gazza's Super Soccer
ST & AMIGA 21.50

★ AIR & SEA SUPREMACY★
Silent Services, Gunship, Wings, Carrier Command & P47 Thunderbolt & F-15 Strike Eagle (wings replaceses F-15 in Amiga Pack)

★ ADDICTED TO FUN ★
Bubble Bobble, Rainbow Island & New Zealand story

★ DOUBLE DOUBLE BILL★
TV Sports Football, Wings, Lords of the Rising Sun & TV

*** BOARD GENIUS ***
Scrabble Deluke, Deluxe Monopoly, Risk & Cludeo Mster Detective **AMIGA ONLY 21.50**

★ SUPER SEGA★
Goldern Axe, E.S.W.A.T., Shinobi, Super Monaco G.P. &

★ A.D.& D. COMPILATION ★
Heros of the Lance, Dragons of Flame Hillsfar
AMIGA ONLY 21.50

★ AIR COMBAT ACES ★
Falcon, Gunship & Fighter Bomber **ST & AMIGA 21.50**

★ MAX PACK COMPILATION★
Turrican 2, St Dragon, SWIV & Nightshift **ST & AMIGA 21.50**

★ QUEST FOR ADVENTURE★
Indiana Jones The Adventure, Mean Streets & Operation Stealth **ST & AMIGA 24.99**

★ WINNING FIVE★
Iron Lord, Night Hunter, Twin World, Puffy's Saga & Sir Fred
ST & AMIGA 9.99

★ CLASSIC 4 (RENAISSANCE)★
Invaders, Asteriods, Galazions & Centipede **ST& AM 7.99**

★ SPORTING WINNERS★
Daily Double Horse racing, Steve Davis Snooker, Brian Clough's Football Fortunes **ST& AM 17.50**

★ MAGNETIC SCROLLS★
Fish, Corruption & Guild Of Thieves **ST& AM 21.50**

★ MOVIE PREMIER★
Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles, Gremlins 2, Back to the Future 2 & Days of Tunder **ST & AM 21.50**

★ WHEELS OF FIRE ★
Turbo Outrun, Chase HQ, Powerdrift &Hard Drivin
ST &AMIGA 17.50

★ THE TOP LEAGUE★
Speedball 2, Rick Dangerous 2, Falcon, Midwinter & T.V. Sports Football. **ST & AMIGA 21.50**

★ SOCCER MANIA★
Microprose Soccer, Football Manager 2, Gazz's Super Soccer & Football Manager World Cup Edition
ST & AM. 17.50

★ QUEST & GLORY★
Midwinter, Cadaver, B.A.T., Iron Lord & Bloodwych

★ TNT★
Hard Drivin, Toobin, Xybots, APB, & Dragon Spirit
ST& AM 17.50

★ SUPER SIM PACK★
International 3-D Tennis, Italy 1990, Crazy Cars 2 & Airborne

★ VIRTUAL REALITY VOL 1★
Midwinter, Carrier Command, Stunt Car Racer, Starglider 2, & International Soccer Challenge
AMIGA 24.99 & ST 21.50

★ FOOTBALL CRAZY★
Kick Off 2, Final Whistle & Player Manager
ST & AMIGA 21.50

★ HANNA BARBERA CARTOON★
Yogi's Great Escape, Hong Kong Phooey, Ruff & Ready & Beverley Hills Cats **ST & AMIGA 13.99**

★ CAPCOM COLLECTION★
Strider 1 & 2, Ghouls 'N' Ghosts, Forgotten Worlds, U.N. Squadron, Dynasty Wars, Led Storm & Last Duel
ST & AMIGA 21.50

★ SUPER HEROES★
Strider 2, Indiana Jones, Last Ninja 2, & Spy Who Loved me

3.5" DOUBLE SIDED. DOUBLE DENSITY WITH LABELS

1	0.59
10	5.50
25	12.50
3.5 40 PIECE DISC BOX	6.99
3.5 80 PIECE DISC BOX	7.99
3.5" 120 PIECE DISC BOX	9.99
MOUSE MATS	2.99
ST & AG EXTENSION LEADS	5.99

AMEGA EXPANSIONS

AMIGA 1/2 MEG EXPANSION WITHOR WITHOUT CLOCK 29.99

ORDER FORM AND INFORMATION

All orders sent FIRST CLASS subject to availability. Just fill in the coupon and send it to: SOFTWARE CITY, Unit 4, The BDC, 21 Temple Street, Wolverhampton. WV2 4AN.

ORDER FORM

NAME..

ADDRESS..

....

POSTCODE.............................TEL NO : ....

Name of Game	Computer	Value
	Postage	
	TOTAL	

POSTAGE RATES : Please add 50p for post & packing on all orders under £5. EEC countries add £1 per item. Non EEC countries add £2

PAYING BY CHEQUE - Cheques payable to Software City.

CardNo:...Date.....................

Expiry Date..........................

EUROPEAN ORDERS
MASTER CARS
EUROCARD ACCEPTED

Signature :...
Date :..

ACE 02/92

ed at all coasts, and falling Zonks will trap the unwary." Well, with an intro like that, you can resist? Supaplex comes a quite a refreshing change from a company that normally turns up heavy-duty simulations and plane-based arcade games - it's half puzzle, half arcade, a sort of weird hybrid of Boulderdash and Pacman. In each of the game's 111 levels, Murphy must snap up all the "infotrons" by whizzing about the four-way scrolling screen, gobbling up bits of the landscape and grabbing them when you find them. The trick is to eat the landscape in such a way that you don't send all mannaer of horrible heavy things crashing down on yourself. As the levels progress things can more complex, with warp gates, explosive devices and marauding enemies.

Okay, okay, so it's Boulderdash with knobs on, but it isn't actually at all bad. It may not look like much, but it feels nice and smooth and the simplistic action is strangely compelling. With plenty of options and well-varied levels, Supaplex is likely to keep you playing for quite a while - provided its simple charms manage to grab you in the first place.

☆☆☆☆

SUSPICIOUS CARGO

Price **Amiga/Atari ST £25.99**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Gremlinn**

The pseudo follow-up to BSS Jane Seymour is a lot more enjoyable than its mediocre predecessor, primarily because it's a whole lot more accessible and has a pleasant sense of humour. We've classified it as an adventure here, but it's really a hotch-potch of many different game styles - there's a strong RPG element throughout and a sprinking of arcade-based sub-games along the way.

As maverick space pilot Jonah Hayes, the player's job is transport a highly dodgy shipment of genetic refuse across the galaxy in his rundown spaceship, the Lady Luck. Even something as simple as keeping the ship operational and on course is not as easy as it sounds, and things are naturally complicated along the way by a variety of unsavoury characters who want nothing more than to throw spanners in the works and prevent Jonah's cargo from reaching its destination.

I must admit to being a little perplexed by Suspicious Cargo - I mean, just what exactly is it? The way that it seems to flit between gameplay styles can be confusing, but despite this the storyline holds the disparate elements together well, and as such you end up with a surprisingly coherent and playble product. It's by no means anything groundbreaking, but it will be appreciated by anyone who fancies a good space yarn with a few laughs.

☆☆☆☆

TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES - THE COIN-OP

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Image Works**

Now, let's get one thing straight from the outset, Turtles is neither the most complicated or involving game in the world. However, Probe's conversion of what could best be described as a fairly basic coin-op beat-'em-up is admirably close to its coin-gobbling dad, complete with all the regular Turtles and their opponents.

Catering for one or two players, the game leads the Turtles through a brace of increasingly dangerous screens, gradually leading up to a climax involving rescuing the glamorous April from a building. set alight by the evil Shredder.

Turtles suffers from two distinct problems. The first is that one feels Turtlemania is definitely on the wane, and there is no longer the public fever guaranteeing that anything green will sell by the bucketload. The second is that, despite Probe's pretty sound conversion, the game's quite easy, and even the coin-op itself wasn't that incredible.

☆☆☆☆

THUNDER BURNER

Price **Atari ST £24.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Loriciels**

"Top arcade game with action, futirustic combats and super stress!!", we are promised. *Space Harrier* on the Spectrum is what we get.

Slogging his way through twelve stages of shocking 3D graphics, our intrepid hero must control his Transformer-like craft deep into the heart of enemy territory and destroy the evil aliens' Big Base.

Even painting a girl on the back of the box with her noughts out has failed to make Thunder Burner at all exciting.

Piloting the jet plane is actually more fun since everything moves at a faster pace, but the bi-ped robot has a better chance of destroying the pill-boxes containing, one presumes, dirty alien scum.

It's all a bit poor, and apart from some end-of-level monsters which are presentable enough, falls a long way short of even the most basic blast standards.

And if all that seems a little harsh, Loriciels can al least comfort themselves with the knowledge that they win the Most Gratuitous Tit Award. Hooray.

☆

TIP OFF

Price Amiga/Atari ST £25.99
Genre Sports Game
Publisher Anco

The fact that Anco's latest sports game comes from the keyboard of Kick Off co-designer Steve Screech has certainly attracted a lot of interest during the game's development, but now the final product's here it has be said that it represents somewhat of a disappointment.

The idea is fine - apply the same techniques that made Kick Off great, jiggle them about a bit to fit Basketball's smaller play area and rules and away you go. And indeed many of Kick Off's trademarks are in evidence here - the game's simple, instinctive, and very fast indeed. But (and it's a big but) it just doesn't work.. Basketball is a fast game, but Tip Off's interpretation of it is a bit too speedy for comfort. As a result it just doesn't quite spark in the same way as Kick Off, andso basketball fans would still be best advised to go with Cinemaware's version.

★★★

TOE JAM & EARL

Price **Megadrive £34.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Sega**

Jammin'! Or, in Earth speak, oh dear. Toe Jam & Earl were presumably intended, like Sonic before them, to become 'cult' game personalities and thus attract a whole new legion of fans to the Megadrive. I don't know if they has or not, but on the basis of the game they're in I can't for the life of me see how they would. If Sega think this is what 'Ver Kids' want, then they're sorely mistaken.

It's a simple maze game. One or two players, controlling the far-out aliens of the title, have to travel around a number of exotic islands searching for the ten missing pieces of their crashed spaceship. Some islands are populated by monsters of various description that have to be avoided.

Along the way the gruesome twosome may find bonuses which will award them anything from speed-up trainers to a blow from a bolt of lightning. Mixed blessings or what?

And... er... that's it. Yes, really. All the game consists of is wandering around, very slowly. Boring really doesn't quite sum up the toe-curling tedium of the whole debacle. The only points of special note are the way the screen splits when Toe Jam & Earl get too far apart, the appealing nature of the two aliens and the well-funky music. Any chance of putting the music on CD, Sega?

☆

TRADERS

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Linel**

If you imagine a hotch-potch of Utopia, Mega lo Mania and Populous, except in 2D, you'd be pretty close to understanding what Traders is all about. Again, it's a race for technological development and fiscal success, with up to four players battling it out on a mysterious planet, evolving robots and competing with the rigours of nature, as well as hostile advances from each other.

Distinct from lots of God sims and strat games of late, Traders has got a reasonably light touch and doesn't weight the player down with facts and figures. Instead it lets them explore their new world and get on with the business of exploiting and ruining it with the minimum amount of fuss.

While there's no question that the game boasts as much depth or longevity as any of the games mentioned above, Traders acts as a pretty solid intruduction to the strategy genre. Not too shabby.

☆☆☆

BUDGET SOFTWARE ....AMIGA

Starways	£4.99
Brain Storm	£4.99
Eye	£4.99
Jocky Wilson Darts	£5.99
Cruncher Factory	£5.99
Demolition	£5.99
Dr Fruit	£5.99
Grid Start	£5.99
Suicide Mission	£5.99
Dugger	£5.99
Spy Vs Spy	£5.99
Pioneer Plague	£5.99
Gravity	£5.99
Saint & Greavsie	£5.99
ConFlict in Europe	£5.99
Galaxy Force	£5.99
Jambala	£5.99
Football Manager	£5.99
Deathbringer	£5.99
Navy Moves	£5.99
Atomic Robokid	£5.99
Bomber Mission	£5.99
Veteran	£5.99
Terrys Big Adventure	£5.99
Dogs Of War	£5.99
Uninvited	£5.99
Thunderstrike	£5.99
Mantis	£5.99
Badlands	£5.99
Gemini Wing	£5.99
Dogs Of War	£5.99
Uninvited	£5.99
Thunderstrike	£5.99
Mantis	£5.99
Badlands	£5.99
Gemini Wing	£5.99
Spy V's Spy	£5.99
Wicked	£5.99
Chambers of Shaolin	£5.99
Scrambled Spirits	£5.99
Persian Gulf Inferno	£6.99
Basil	£6.99
Chrono Quest	£6.99
Nevermind	£6.99
Warhead	£6.99
Helter Skelter	£4.99
Final Countdown	£6.99
Thunderbirds	£5.99
Styx	£6.99
Dark Castle	£7.99
Battleships	£7.99
Microprose	£7.99
Arkanoid	£6.99
Rocky	£4.99
Challenger	£5.99
Fighter Mission	£5.99
Invaders	£6.99
Ice Hockey	£5.99
Jump Jet	£5.99
Skate of the Art	£5.99

SATURN SOFTWARE

3, WOODLAND HOUSE
WOODLAND ROAD
NEW SOUTHGATE
LONDON
N 17 1PN

BUDGET SOFTWARE ....S.T

Starbreaker	£5.99
Photon Storm	£5.99
Road Wars	£5.99
Bermuda Project	£5.99
Gravity	£5.99
Dark Castle	£5.99
Fire Zone	£5.99
Shadowgate	£5.99
Technocop	£5.99
Terrys Big Adventure	£5.99
Vindicators	£5.99
Crystal Castles	£5.99
Bangkok Knights	£5.99
Question Of Sport	£5.99
Rotox	£5.99
Supercycle	£5.99
Paper Boy	£5.99
Final Battle	£5.99
Total Eclipe	£5.99
After the War	£5.99
Dogs Of War	£5.99
Ice Palace	£5.99
Platoon	£5.99
Death Bringer	£5.99
Darkside	£5.99
Boxer	£5.99
Battleships	£5.99
Lock On	£5.99
Super Hang On	£5.99
North & South	£3.99
Wicked	£3.99
Hammersmith	£5.99
Ballistix	£5.99
Willow	£3.99
Space Harrier 2	£3.99
GBA Champ Basketball	£3.99
Orbiter	£6.99
Last Duel	£6.99
Menace	£6.99
Road Raider	£6.99
Gridiron 1.2	£6.99
Barbarian 2	£6.99
Makrodesk	£6.99
Wind Walker	£6.99
Balance of Power	£6.99
Crackdown	£6.99
Indiana Jones	£6.99
Lancelot	£6.99
Voyager	£6.99
Soccer Supreme	£6.99
John Lowe Darts	£6.99
Infestation	£6.99
Rocket Ranger	£7.99
Flintstones	£5.99
Tusker	£5.99
Deja Vu	£6.99
Captain Fizz	£6.99
Rockford	£6.99
3D Tennis	£6.99

	A.M	S.T
4D Boxing	16.99	16.99
3D Master Golf	23.99	23.99
1/2Meg Upgrade+Clock	29.99	N.A
1 Meg Cricket	19.99	N.A
688 Sub Attack	16.99	16.99
Afrika Korps	16.99	16.99
Agony	18.99	18.99
Alcatraz	16.99	16.99
Alpha Waves	16.99	16.99
AMOS	29.99	N.A
AMOS 3D	24.99	N.A
AMOS Compiler	19.99	N.A
Amazing Spiderman	15.99	15.99
Aracnaphobia	16.99	16.99
Atomic Robo Kid	16.99	16.99
A10 Tank Killer	21.99	21.99
A.D.S	19.99	19.99
A.T.F. 11	16.99	16.99
A.W.S.O.M.E	16.99	16.99
Back To The Future 3	14.99	14.99
Bandit King Of Anc China	21.99	21.99
Bards Tale 3	16.99	16.99
B.A.T.	22.99	22.99
Battle Bound	16.99	16.99
Battle Command	16.99	16.99
Battle Chess 2	16.99	16.99
Battle Hawk 1942	16.99	16.99
Beast Buster	17.99	17.99
Big Hun	16.99	16.99
Bill And Ted's Adventure	16.99	16.99
Billy The Kid	15.99	15.99
Birds Of Pray	26.99	26.99
Blues Brothers	16.99	16.99
Blade Warrior	16.99	16.99
Blue Max	19.99	19.99
Brain Blaster	16.99	16.99
Buck Rogers	19.99	19.99
Cadaver	16.99	16.99
Captive	15.99	15.99
Captain Planet	16.99	16.99
Champion Of The Raj	15.99	15.99
Centurion	16.99	16.99
Challenge Golf	16.99	16.99
Chaos Strikes Back	16.99	16.99
Chase HQ	15.99	15.99
Chase HQ 2	15.99	14.99
Chuck Yeagers AFT	16.99	16.99
Cohort	20.99	21.99
Colditz	19.99	19.99
Conan The Cimmerian	21.99	21.99
Corporation	12.99	12.99
Crime Wave	16.99	16.99
Cruise For The Corpse	16.99	16.99
Cybercon 3	16.99	16.99
Darkman	16.99	16.99
Das Boot	21.99	21.99
Days of Thunder	15.99	15.99
Demoniak	19.99	19.99
Deuteros	16.99	16.99
Double Dragon 3	16.99	16.99
Duck Tales	16.99	16.99
Dick Tracey	16.99	16.99
Epic	16.99	16.99
Eye Of The Beholder (1meg)	19.99	19.99
Double Dragon III	16.99	16.99
Dragon Ninja	14.99	14.99
Dragon Wars	16.99	16.99
ELF (ocean)	15.99	15.99
Elvira Mistress of Dark	21.99	21.99
Elvira Mistress of Dark 11	24.99	24.99
F14 Tom Cat	18.99	18.99
F15 Strike Eagle 2	23.99	23.99
F16 Combat Pilot	16.99	16.99
F19 Stealth Fighter	19.99	19.99
F29 Retaliator	14.99	14.99
First Samuari	16.99	16.99
Final Blow	16.99	16.99
Final Whistle	9.99	9.99
Final Conflict	16.99	16.99
Final Flight	16.99	16.99
Flight of the Intruder	19.99	19.99
Floor 13	21.99	21.99
Future Baseball	16.99	16.99
Gauntlet 3	16.99	16.99
Ganghis Khan	21.99	21.99
Gods	15.99	15.99
Golden Axe	16.99	16.99
Graham Gooch	21.99	21.99
Grand Prix	23.99	23.99
Gremlins 2	16.99	16.99
Gunboat	21.99	21.99
Gunship 2000	21.99	21.99
Hawk	19.99	19.99
Harpoon (1 meg)	19.99	19.99
Hard Driving 2	14.99	14.99
Hard Nova	16.99	16.99
Heros Quest (1 meg)	21.99	21.99
Hill Street Blues	16.99	16.99
Home Alone	16.99	16.99
Horror Zombies	16.99	16.99
Hunter	22.00	22.00
Hudson Hawk	15.99	15.99
Imperium	16.99	16.99
Interceptor	26.99	26.99
Ishido	19.99	19.99
Ivanhoe	14.99	14.99
Jack Nichlaus Golf	17.99	17.99
Jahangir Khans Squash	16.99	16.99
Jimmy White Whirlwind	19.99	19.99
Judge Dredd	18.99	18.99
Killing Game Show	16.99	16.99
Kick Off 2	13.50	13.50
Knight of the Sky	23.99	23.99
Lasr Ninja 3	16.99	16.99
Lemmings	16.99	16.99
Lemmings Data Disc	9.99	9.99
Life	20.99	20.99
Logical	16.99	16.99
Loom	19.99	19.99
Lost Patrol	14.99	14.99
Lotus Esprit	15.99	15.99
M1 Tank Platoon	19.99	19.99
Mercs	15.99	15.99
Mega Traveller 1	20.99	20.99
Magic Pockets	15.99	15.99
Master Golf	23.99	23.99
Man UTD Europe	16.99	16.99
Mega Lo Mania	19.99	19.99
Metal Master	15.99	15.99
Metal Mutant	15.99	15.99
Midwinter	19.99	19.99
Midwinter 2	19.99	19.99
Mig 29 Fulcrum	21.99	21.99
Mig 29M Super Fulcrum	25.99	25.99
Moon Base	22.99	22.99
Moon Stone	22.99	22.99
Myth	15.99	15.99
Monkey Island	15.99	15.99
Monkey Island 2	16.99	16.99
Nam 1965-1975	19.50	19.50
Navy Seals	14.99	14.99
Neverending Story 2	16.99	16.99
Nightshift	16.99	16.99
Operation Stealth	16.95	16.95
Out Run Europa	16.99	16.99
Panza Kickboxing	16.99	16.99
Pang	16.99	16.99
Pegausus	19.95	19.95
Plotting	15.95	15.95
Powermonger	16.95	16.95
PGA Golf Tour	16.99	N.A
P.P. Hammer	16.99	16.99
Predator 2	14.99	15.99
Prehistoric	16.99	16.99
Prince Of Persia	15.95	15.95
Puzino	15.95	15.95
Pro Flight	32.99	32.99
Pro Tennis Tour 2	16.99	16.99
Railroad Tycoon	23.96	23.96
Rainbow Islands	14.99	14.99
Realms	19.99	19.99
Retro	15.99	15.99
R.B.I.2 Baseball	20.99	20.99
Rick Dangerous 2	16.99	16.99
Robocop	13.99	13.99
Robocop 2	14.99	14.99
Robin Hood	16.99	16.99
Rod Land	16.99	16.99
Rollin'Ronny	16.99	16.99
Red Baron	25.99	25.99
R-Type 2	16.99	16.99
Rugby The World Cup	16.69	16.69
Savage Empire	19.99	19.99
Search For The King	19.99	19.99
Secret Weapon Of The Luftwaffe	19.99	19.99
Secret of Monkey Island 1m	16.99	16.99
Shadow of The Beast 2	15.99	19.99
Silent Service 2	23.99	23.99
Shuttle The Sim	29.99	29.99
Sim Earth	16.99	16.99
Space 1889	20.99	20.99
Space Quest IV	20.99	20.99
Space Gun	15.99	15.99
Speedball 2	15.99	15.99
Simpsons	15.99	15.99
Spirit of Exculiber	21.99	20.99
Star Trek V	16.99	16.99
Super Cars 2	16.99	16.99
Super Space Invaders	20.99	20.99
Swap	16.99	16.99
Switch Blade 2	15.99	15.99
Team Suzuki	15.99	15.99
Terminator 2	14.99	14.99
Test Drive 3	15.99	15.99
Their Finest Hour	19.99	19.99
Their Finest Mission	19.99	19.99
The Punisher	16.99	16.99
Total Recall	15.99	15.99
Tournament Golf	16.99	16.99
ThunderHawk	21.99	21.99
Turrican 2	15.99	15.99
UN Squadron	16.99	16.99
Ultimat V	19.99	19.99
Ultima V1	20.99	20.99
Utopia	20.99	20.99
USS John Young	16.99	16.99
Un Squadron	14.99	14.99
Vendetta	16.99	16.99
Warlords (1 Meg)	20.99	20.99
War Zone	15.99	15.99
White Dealth (1 Meg)	19.99	19.99
Wild Wheels	16.99	16.99
Wiz Kid	14.99	14.99
Wonderland	19.99	19.99
Wolf Pack	19.99	19.99
W.W.F.	15.99	15.99
Ziltrax	16.99	16.99
Zone Warrior	15.99	15.99

EDITION ONE £16.99
Double Dragon, Xenon, Gemini Wing, Silkworm.

FULL BLAST £18.99
Chicago 90, Rick Dangerous, Highway Patrol 2, P47, Carrier Command, Ferrari Form 1.

ADDICTED TO FUN RAINBOW COLLECTION £17.99
New Zealand Story, Bubble Bobble, Rainbow Island

SOCCER MANIA £16.99
Football Manager 2, Football Manager World Cup Edition & Gazza's Super Soccer

QUEST AND GLORY 21.50
Midwinter, Cadavuf, B.A.T., Iron Lord & Bloodwych

TEST DRIVE 2 COLLECTION £21.99
Muscle Cars, California Challenge, European Challange, Duel, Super Cars.

MAGNUM 4 £17.99
Afterburner, Double Dragon, Operation Wolf, Batman Caped Crusader.

FLIGHT COMMAND £13.99
Eliminator, Strike Force, Lancaster, Sky Fox, Sky Chase.

FISTS OF FURY £16.99
Dynamite Dux, Shinobi, Ninja Warriors, Double Dragon 2.

BIG BOX £15.99
Captain Blood, Tin Tin on the Moon, Safari Guns, Teenage Queen, Bubble Plus, Purple Saturn Days, Krypton Egg, Jumping Jackson, Bobo, Hostages.

HEROS £16.99
Barbarian 2, Running Man, Star Wars, Licence to Kill.

T.N.T. £15.99
Hard Drivin, Toobin, Xybots, A.P.B. & Dragon Spirit

Please make cheques & P.O's payable to Saturn Software. P&P is included in UK. Orders under £10 add 75p per item.
In Europe please add £3.00 per item. Rest of the world £4.00 per item.

COMPUTER
DATE
NAME
TITLE
PRICE
ADDRESS
PRICE
POST CODE
PRICE
TEL:
MAIL ORDER ONLY
TOTAL
CHEQUE ____
P.O's ____

oh mr newsagent

Blimey! There you are, casually flicking through your latest issue of ACE magazine when a horrible and genuinely frightening thought occurs to you. Not only are you nearing the end of an especially thrill-powered edition of the greatest sci-fi comic in the galaxy, or something, but you can't for the life of you remember when the next issue is going to come out.

You might be going out to a discotheque on the night before publication date, and may be too hung-over (although we all know excess intake of alcoholic beverages is neither big or hard) to fight your way through the crowds which will be undoubtedly vying for the last copy in your local shop.

Or perhaps you've read our Next Month page which will probably have the wrong month on it, and so you won't know *what* is going on.

But no worries. Simply fill out this form and give it to your friendly newsagent who will be more than happy to reserve the next issue of ACE Magazine for you, for as long as is necessary, no matter when you eventually get off your fat arse to go and get it. Hooray.

And some of the more progressive newsagents around the country may even have set up their own delivery service which may be available for those of you who care to tick the appropriate box.

Dear Mr Newsagent,

Having waded through an especially unconvincing coupon in ~ACE magazine, I am nevertheless willing to fill in this wretched little coupon asking you to reserve (or deliver, if I have ticked the box) the next issue of ACE for me. Here is my name and address.

Thanks.

Name:..

Address:...

....

And here is the box that I have ticked if I want my copy delivered: ☐

PREMIER MAIL ORDER

*We are on stand No 124 at the 16 Bit Computer Show. Titles marked * are not yet available and will be sent on day of release.*
Please send cheque/PO/Access/Visa No. and expiry date to :

Dept AC11, Trybridge Ltd., 8 Buckwins Sq., Burnt Mills, Basildon, Essex. SS13 1BJ.

Please state make and model of computer when ordering. P&P inc. UK on orders over £5.00. Less than £5.00 and Europe add £1.00 per item. Elsewhere please add £2.00 per item for Airmail. These offers are available Mail order only..Telephone orders: mon-Fri 9am-7pm. Saturday 10am-4pm. Fax orders : 0268 590076. Tel Orders : 0268 - 590766

GAME	ST	AMIGA
3D Pool	7.99	7.99
3D Construction Kit	26.99	32.99
1/2 Meg Upgrade	-	24.99
1/2 Meg Upgrade with clock	-	26.99
Afterburner	6.99	6.99
Agony *	-	24.99
Alien Breed (1 Meg)	-	16.99
Alien Strom *	16.99	16.99
Altered Beast	6.99	6.99
Air Land Sea *	-	24.99
Air Support *	-	19.99
Air Duel *	22.99	22.99
Assault on Alcatraz *	16.99	16.99
688 Attack Sub		16.99
AMOS		29.99
Amos 3D	-	24.99
Amos Compiler	-	19.99
Another World*	19.99	19.99
APB	6.99	6.99
Arkanoid 2	6.99	6.99
Armour - Geddon	16.99	16.99
Barbarian 2 *	-	19.99
Bards Tale Triple Pack *	-	24.99
Batman Caped Crusader	6.99	6.99
Batman The Movie	6.99	6.99
Battle of Britain	19.99	19.99
Beach Volley	6.99	6.99
Beastbusters	16.99	16.99
Birds of Prey *	26.99	26.99
Black Crypt *	-	19.99
Big Run *	16.99	16.99
Blues Brothers *	16.99	16.99
Blue Max	19.99	19.99
Bonanza Bros *	16.99	16.99
Bubble Bobble	6.99	6.99
Budokan	-	8.99
4D Boxing	16.99	16.99
Cabal	6.99	6.99
Campaign *	22.99	22.99
Capcom Collection *	19.99	19.99
Castles *	19.99	19.99
Captain Planet	16.99	16.99
Cisco Heat *	16.99	16.99
Chaos Engine *	16.99	-
Chase HQ	6.99	6.99
Continental Circus	6.99	6.99
Crasy Cars 3 *	16.99	16.99
Centurion	-	16.99
Cricket Captain	16.99	16.99
Cruise for a Corpse	19.99	19.99
Cyberball	6.99	6.99
Das Boot	19.99	19.99
Defender of Crown	7.99	7.99
Death Knights of Krynn (1 Meg)	-	19.99
Deathbringer	19.99	19.99
Demonsgate *	22.99	22.99
Deutros *	19.99	19.99
Double Double Bill	-	22.99
Double Dragon 3 *	16.99	16.99
Double Dragon	6.99	6.99
Deluxe Paint	39.99	-
Deluxe Paint 4	-	54.99
Disney Animation	-	59.99
Dizzy Collection	16.99	16.99
Dragons Lair 2		26.99
Dragons Lair (1Meg)		26.99
Dragons Lair Time Warp	26.99	26.99
Dragon Ninja	6.99	6.99
4D Drivin	16.99	16.99
Epic *	19.99	19.99
ELF	16.99	16.99
Elvira 2 (1 Meg)*	-	24.99
Eye of the Beholder (1 meg)	-	19.99
Eye of the Storm *	19.99	19.99
Face Off *	16.99	16.99
F15 Strike Eagle 2	22.99	22.99
F16 Combat Pilot	16.99	16.99
F19 Stealth Fighter	19.99	19.99
Ferrari Formula 1	8.99	8.99
Flag *	19.99	19.99
Final Blow *	16.99	16.99
Final Fight	16.99	16.99
First Samurai *	16.99	16.99
Flight of the Intruder	22.99	22.99
Flood	8.99	8.99
Football Crazy *	16.99	16.99
Football Director 2	16.99	16.99
Formula One Grand Prix *	22.99	22.99
Fun School 3 5-7	16.99	16.99
Fun School 3 over 7	16.99	16.99
Fun School 3 under 5	16.99	16.99

GAME	ST	AMIGA
Fun School 2 (6-8)	13.99	13.99
Fun School 2 (over 8)	13.99	13.99
Fun School 2 (under 6)	13.99	13.99
Gaunlet 3 *	16.99	16.99
Ghostbusters 2	6.99	6.99
G Loc *	16.99	16.99
Gods	16.99	16.99
Godfather Action *	16.99	16.99
Godfather Adventure *	-	19.99
Golden Axe	16.99	16.99
Graham Gooch *	19.99	19.99
Guy Spy *	26.99	26.99
Harlequin *	16.99	16.99
Hero Quest data	9.99	9.99
Hitchikers Guide	7.99	7.99
Head Over Heels *	6.99	6.99
Heimdall *	22.99	22.99
Heroesquest	16.99	16.99
Home Alone	-	19.99
Hudson Hawk *	16.99	16.99
Hunter	19.99	19.99
IK+	6.99	6.99
Indy J'es Atlantis Adv (1Mg)*	-	19.99
Indy J'es Atlantis Action *	16.99	16.99
Interceptor	-	8.99
Indianapolis 500	-	16.99
Ivanhoe	6.99	6.99
Jack Nichlaus Extra courses	-	9.99
Jack Nichlaus Clip Art	-	9.99
Jack Nicklaus unlimited Golf	-	19.99
Jimmy Whites Snooker	19.99	19.99
Keys To Maramon *	-	16.99
Kick Off 2	9.99	9.99
Kick Off 2 (1 Meg)	-	11.99
Kick Off + Extra Time	6.99	6.99
King Of Chicago	-	7.99
Kings Quest 4	-	14.99
Klaxx	6.99	6.99
KO 2 Super League *	9.99	9.99
K.O.2 Final Whistle	8.99	8.99
K.O.2 Giants of Europe *	7.99	7.99
K.O.2 Return of Europe	7.99	7.99
K.O.2 Winning Tactics	5.99	5.99
Knightmare *	22.99	22.99
Knights of the Sky *	22.99	22.99
Last Ninja 2	6.99	6.99
Last Ninja 3 *	16.99	16.99
Laser Squad 2 *	16.99	16.99
Leander *	-	19.99
Leather Goddess	7.99	7.99
Legend *	16.99	16.99
Leisure Suit Larry	14.99	14.99
Leisure Suit Larry 2	14.99	14.99
Lemmings	16.99	16.99
Lemmings Construction Kit *	16.99	16.99
Lemmings Data Disk *	13.99	13.99
Leisure Suit Larry 3	-	14.99
Licence to Kill	6.99	6.99
Lombard Rally	6.99	6.99
Lord of the Rings	-	19.99
Magentic Scrolls Coll (1 Meg)	19.99	19.99
Magic Pockets	16.99	16.99
Magic Fly	8.99	8.99
Man Utd Europe	16.99	16.99
Max *	19.99	19.99
Mega Lo Mania	16.99	19.99
Mega Traveller 1	19.99	19.99
Mega Traveller 2 (1 Meg)*	19.99	19.99
Mega Twins *	19.99	19.99
Microprose Golf *	22.99	22.99
M1 Tank Platoon	19.99	19.99
Moon Stone *	19.99	19.99
Mid Winter	14.99	14.99
Midwinter 2	22.99	22.99
Mig 29 Super Falcum	26.99	26.99
Might And Magic 3 *	-	19.99
Myth *	16.99	16.99
New Zealand Story	6.99	6.99
Ninja Collection	16.99	16.99
Ork *	-	19.99
Outrun	6.99	6.99
Outrun Europa	16.99	16.99
Paperboy 2 *	16.99	16.99
Parasol Stars *	16.99	16.99
Pegasus *	16.99	16.99
Pit Fighter 2 *	16.99	16.99
PGA Tour Golf	-	16.99
Player Manager	12.99	12.99
Platoon	6.99	6.99
Populous	8.99	8.99
Populous 2 *	19.99	19.99
Pools Of Darkness *	-	19.99

GAME	ST	AMIGA
Police Quest 2	14.99	14.99
Powerdrift	6.99	6.99
Power Pack	14.99	14.99
Powermonger Data Disk 1 *	9.99	9.99
Power Up	19.99	19.99
Powermonger	19.99	19.99
Projectyle	8.99	8.99
Quest For Adventure *	19.99	19.99
Race Driver *	16.99	16.99
Rainbow Collection	13.99	13.99
Railroad Tycoon (1 Meg)	22.99	22.99
Red Heat	6.99	6.99
Red Baron * (1 Meg)	-	26.99
Reach for the Skies *	22.99	22.99
Realms *	19.99	19.99
R-Type	6.99	6.99
R-Type 2	16.99	16.99
Robin Hood	16.99	16.99
Robocod *	16.99	16.99
RoboCop	6.99	6.99
Rodland	16.99	16.99
Robin Smiths Cricket	16.99	16.99
Robocop 3 *	19.99	19.99
Rocket Ranger	7.99	7.99
Rise of the Dragon (1 Meg)	-	26.99
Rugby World Cup	16.99	16.99
Rules of Engagment	-	16.99
Run the Gauntlet	6.99	6.99
Search for the King (1 Meg)	-	24.99
Secrets of the Luftwaffe *	-	19.99
Secret of Monkey Is. (1 Meg)	16.99	16.99
Secret of Monkey Is. 2 (1 Meg)*	-	19.99
Shadow Lands *	19.99	19.99
Shadow Sorceror	-	19.99
Shinobi	6.99	6.99
Shuttle *	19.99	19.99
Silkworm	6.99	6.99
Sim Earth *	19.99	19.99
Silent Service 2 (1 Meg)	22.99	22.99
Simpsons *	16.99	16.99
Sinbad	7.99	7.99
Ski or Die	-	8.99
Space 1889 (1 Meg)	19.99	19.99
Space Ace 2 *	26.99	26.99
Space Crusade *	16.99	16.99
Smash TV	16.99	16.99
Space Ace	26.99	26.99
Speedball 2	16.99	16.99
Speedball	7.99	7.99
Stratego	-	16.99
Strip Poker 2 + Data	6.99	6.99
Strikefleet	16.99	16.99
Star Flight	7.99	7.99
Starflight 2	-	16.99
Supercars	6.99	6.99
Supercars 2	16.99	16.99
Super Monaco GP	16.99	16.99
Supremacy	19.99	19.99
Super Hang On	6.99	6.99
Suspicous Cargo	19.99	19.99
Switchblade 2	16.99	16.99
Terminator 2	16.99	16.99
Test Drive Compilation	19.99	19.99
Team Jaguar *	19.99	19.99
Team Yankee	19.99	19.99
Team Yankee 2 *	19.99	19.99
Teenage Mutant Turtles	16.99	16.99
Teenage Mutant Turtles 2 *	16.9	16.99
Their Finest Mission	9.99	9.99
Three Stooges	-	7.99
Thunderhawk	19.99	19.99
The Immortal (1 meg)	8.99	8.99
Toobin	6.99	6.99
Toki	16.99	16.99
Turbo Challenge 2 *	16.99	16.99
Turbo Outrun	6.99	6.99
Turrican	6.99	6.99
Turrican 2	9.99	9.99
TV Sports Football	7.99	7.99
UMS 2 (1 Meg)	19.99	19.99
Utopia	19.99	19.99
Ultima 6 *	19.99	19.99
Voyager	6.99	6.99
War Lords (1 Meg)	-	19.99
Wild Wheels	16.99	16.99
Waterloo	7.99	7.99
World Wrestling FED *	16.99	16.99
World Class Rugby *	16.99	16.99
Wizball	6.99	6.99
Wonderland (1 Meg)	19.99	19.99
Wiz Kid *	16.99	16.99
Xenomorph 2 *	16.99	16.99

E.A SPECIAL OFFERS ONLY £8.99 EACH!

Flood	ST & Amiga
Populous	ST & Amiga
Budokan	ST & Amiga
Magic Fly	Amiga
Ferrari Formula 1	ST & Amiga
The Immortal (1 Meg)	ST & Amiga

THIS MONTHS EXTRA SPECIAL OFFER

Jack Nicklaus Golf

AMIGA ONLY

£12.99

SPECIAL OFFERS AMIGA £9.99 EACH!

Nightshift
Gremlins 2
Sword of Sodan
Zak McKraken

JOYSTICKS

Quickjoy Jetfighter	10.99
Cheetah 125+	6.99
Comp Pro Extra	14.99
Quickjoy 2 Turbo	8.99
Quickshot 3 Turbo	8.99
Quickjoy Topstar	16.99

BLANK DISKS

Unbranded

10X3.5" DSDD	5.99
20X3.5" DSDD	10.99
50X3.5" DSDD	23.99
100X3.5"DSDD	44.99

Branded

3.5" DSDD	(each) 1.25
5.25" DSDD	(each) 0.75

Still available

a game of this type.

Battle Isle's most favourable option is the two-player mode - something that's woefully missing from a lot of strategy products these days. A handy split-screen display allows two mates to play head-to-head - although this does mean you can see what your opponent is up to at any time, of course.

Battle Isle is undoubtedly a fine and very 'deep' strategy game, and one that should appeal to anyone who likes the good old-fashioned ways of doing things, without all the interfering bells and whistles. But despite the game's accessibility, many younger players on the lookout for a brain game are more likely to steer towards the likes of Populous II. Good stuff, though.

☆☆☆☆

A320 AIRBUS

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Thalion**

You what? Alright, it's not as if we have any problem flying high in an F-16 or blowing up radar installations in a state-of-the-art stealthfighter - but the A320 Airbus? Is somebody pulling our pilsner? Well, apparently not, as this is one of the biggest releases from German software house Thalion in quite a while. Rather akin to a computerised Jim'll Fix It, the game allows the player to be an airline pilot for a day - well, for however long he likes, really - at the controls of the little-known A320 jetliner.

As anybody who knows anything about aviation at all will expect, A320 Airbus is no simple game. Passenger jets are impossibly more complicated than the fighter planes that have mainly been the subject of simulations in the past. Thalion's game has attempted to simulate the spaghetti-like complexity as accurately as possible - and for the most part it succeeds, although this hyper-realistic approach is unlikely to appeal to the majority of flight-sim gamers. All those knobs, dials and readouts may be a bit too much for the average Joe Shmoe.

A320 Airbus isn't just about flying about a bit, though. Oooh, no. Players get to create their own pilots, take part in training or active duty, work out flight plans and generally make their way up the ladder of commercial aviation. For those that find this sort of thing appealing, there's no doubt that A320 Airbus is actually very good indeed. It's professionally-produced, apart from the occasionally ropey graphics, and though it's not exactly immediate or instinctive, the rewards are there to be had for players willing to plough the manual and learn all the ins and outs. The only problem is, I can't quite imagine who's going to be that interested, when you think about all the other, considerably more action-orientated, flight games on the market today. It's just horses for courses, I suppose.

☆☆☆☆

ACTION PACK

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Compilation**
Publisher **Action 16**

Wot a bargain! Ten games - *Colorado, Cosmic Pirate, Eliminator, Fast Lane, Hostages, Maya, On Safari, Rotor, Sherman M4, Targhan* - for twenty-five quid! Okay, we'll be honest and admit that they're all getting a bit long in the tooth now, and more than a couple of the games on offer here are real Xmas turkey material (*On Safari*, in particular, should be plucked, stuffed with Paxo and bunged in the oven for a good five hours as soon as possible).

However, *Cosmic Pirate* (a supah brill multiway scrolling shoot-'em-up), *Eliminator* (a 3D shoot-'em-up cum driving game) and *Hostages* (a multi-part arcade adventure) more than compensate, and would make a superb value compilation on their own. The other games are poor to middling in quality, but for the price you really can't complain. Highly recommended.

☆☆☆☆

ANOTHER WORLD

Price **Amiga £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Adventure**
Publisher **US Gold**

Explore a mysterious alien world in this peculiar polygon adventure from Delphine. Taking the role of Lester the scientist, the player is transported - as a result of an experiment gone wrong - into an alternate universe where nothing is what it seems. Joystick controlled with relatively little interaction between characters, Another World is a flawed, but brave product.

Although there aren't that many problems to solve and actually the interest in the game is more connected with the look than the feel, it's still a worthwhile purchase.

Overall, it's an impressive game. It's got plenty of drawbacks but on the whole, it scores a big plus. For players looking for a new angle on the arcade adventure genre and in particular any-

BREACH 2

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Impressions**

Though there's nothing particularly special on offer for die-hard RPG fans this month, the follow-up to the highly-successful Breach is worthy of their attention. Set in the future with the player in command of a team of space marines, it's more strategy than role-playing, but the mix of the two genres is an appealing one. Probably the best comparison is with that old favourite *Laser Squad* - Breach 2, however, boasts a considerably more sophisticated approach, with a smart isometric viewpoint, much easier command control and more involving missions.

In each mission scenario, the player leads his team through enemy territory, exploring rooms, collecting objects and doing battle with the alien hordes they encounter. In the classic RPG tradition, characters can be tooled up with a huge array of weapons and equipment, including rifles, rocket launchers and bombs, and all the characters come complete with individual attributes and abilities.

An added boon is that, should the player get bored with the multitude of missions available, they can create and edit their own. How many gamers will want to expend this amount of effort (designing a playable mission on any kind of game is no easy task) remains to be seen, however, and you may want to ask yourself if you're ever likely to make use of the feature. But there are enough predesigned missions to make one who has a stronger interest in new graphic styles than the depth or longevity of their game, it fits the bill perfectly.

☆☆☆

AEROSTAR

Price **GameBoy £24.99 (Import)**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Vic Tokai**

What do you get if you cross a platform game with a vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up? A bit of a bloody mess, that's what. Aerostar is a seven-stage blaster where the player has to guide a spaceship along an enemy-held highway. The player can fly into the air for a very limited time to avoid ground fire and hop over gaps in the road, but this makes him vulnerable to attacks from the air. And, of course, there's a plethora of juicy power-ups to be collected along the way that turn the player's craft from something only a little more threatening than a slap in the face into the starship world's equivalent of the 'King of the Beach'.

The idea of combining blasting and bouncing is theoretically good, but unfortunately in practice it doesn't work so well. The player 'jumps' by holding down one of the GameBoy buttons, and the longer the button is held down the longer the jump. Thing is, the GameBoy's design makes it difficult to fire at the same time without taking one finger of the jump button, resulting in the ship plummeting into an abyss. And as the road starts narrowing, and the need for jumping becomes more frequent and the enemy's attacks become more vicious, this becomes particularly annoying.

As it stands, Aerostar is a nice stab at something a bit different, only marred by the slightly clumsy implementation. Worth a look, though, if you're interested by the sound of it.

☆☆☆

ALIEN BREED

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Team 17**

Alien Breed can best be described as the *Aliens* licence that should have been. It grafts Aliens atmosphere onto *Gauntlet*-esque gameplay to create an addictive - albeit unoriginal - winner. One or two players can take part simultaneously, and their job is to run around the six plan-viewed maze-like levels of a monster-infested space station, blasting seven shades of slime out of anything that crawls, slithers or lurks.

Fortunately the problem that always afflicted *Gauntlet* (i.e. though fun, there was no real aim to playing apart from scoring points) has been averted by giving the players a task to complete on each level (normally of the 'find a location and blow it up' nature). Okay, so it's not exactly lifting the game into Arcade Adventure territory, but it's provides enough of a goal to keep the player coming back for more.

The addictive gameplay is backed up by some super-slick scrolling and graphics (although the animation is a little perfunctory), and the term 'arcade-like' is very appropriate here. Throughout the use of sound to create atmosphere and tension is superb, especially when the station's self-destruct sequence is kicked in and the player has to find the exit before the place blows. The only real gripe is that given that the game is for 1Mb Amigas only, you can't help feeling that something slightly more ambitious could have been attempted. But as it stands this is the best straightforward blast for months, and that's a good enough recommendation for anyone.

☆☆☆☆

ARMOURGEDDON

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Psygnosis**

Psygnosis' latest 3D-polygon effort centres around a six-part mission to find the five pieces of a neutron bomb and use it to destroy an enemy HQ. There are six combat vehicles to try out, ranging from ground-hugging tanks and hovercraft to high-flying jets and helicopter and the player must use his 'skill and judgement' to decide when, where and how best to use them to achieve his current mission objectives.

Mouse control of each vehicle is smooth and responsive, with the fluid 3D giving a good pulse-quickening feeling of speed.

The player can switch between the vehicles 'in the field' using the function keys (the computer puts the vehicle on auto when this happens, so there's no risk of a recently-vacated jet ploughing nose-first into the ground). Like Core's *Thunderhawk*, the accent is on action rather than simulation, with the enemy attacking almost as soon as the player pokes a metal-shielded nose out of his bunker, which makes for exciting is somewhat relentless action. But it's not all shoot, shoot, shoot. There's an important management element as well, where the player has to wisely allocate scientists and technicians to develop new weapons and fresh vehicles to replace those blown to pieces by the very active enemy.

Armourgeddon is one of Psygnosis' best games to date, with solid gameplay backing up the impressive visuals. Armourgeddon sick of it? Not one bit.

☆☆☆☆

ATOMINO

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Puzzle**
Publisher **Psygnosis**

Hmmm, fashinating! There are few games based around atomic physics, and even fewer interesting ones, so a big "Huzzah!" and pat on the back for Psygnosis. Atomino is a puzzle game based around atomic valency, i.e. the number of bonds an atom can make with other atoms. Hydrogen, for example, can make one bone while Helium can make two.

The aim of the game is to place randomly-allocated atoms down on a grid and try to form molecules of various sizes. (i.e. at least three atoms big). A molecule is only complete when all the atoms within it have their bonds accounted for.

It all sounds a bit...well...dry, but in fact turns out to be great fun with its addictive challenge, pretty graphics and rising tempo sound making it one of the better puzzle games on the market.

☆☆☆☆

BABY JO

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Platform Game**
Publisher **Loriciels**

Imagine Mirrorsoft's *Brat* in two dimensions and you've got a good idea of what the latest import from French firm Loriciels is all about. Or if you don't know *Brat*, try imagining *Mario* with a nappy-wearing babby as the main character. It's all really rather ludicrous, with the teeny toddler having to eat the bonus goodies as he bounces along the landscape in order to keep fit - but he mustn't eat too much, or he'll mess his nappy! I mean come on! What are these French games designers on? Something pretty strong if the quality of Baby Jo's aesthetics are anything to go by. Poorly designed sprites, atrocious music and hideously jerky backdrops are all proof of Baby Jo's naffness, but it has to be said that it is kind of cute in a rather perverse and definitely strange sort of way.

But if there's one thing it certainly isn't, it's fun - the slow, annoying gameplay and hastily thrown-together design makes sure of that. It's for precisely this reason that Baby Jo should only really be on the shopping list of platform freaks desperate for a new fix - and even then there are much more playable options available.

☆☆

BATTLE ISLE

Price **Atari ST/Amiga/IBM PC £25.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Ubi Soft**

As strategy games get trendier and more diverse, with the likes of *Populous, Mega lo Mania* and *Sim City*, the latest from French firm Ubi Soft represents something quite different, which we hardly see any more these days - a wargame in the classic vein. It's set on a far-off world where two armies do battle for control of a series of islands. It's vaguely similar to the old SSI wargames - units move in turns across a battlefield broken down into hexagonal zones. More experienced gamers will know the sort of thing.

Due to the space-age scenario, the units involved consist of all manner of high-tech tanks, planes, ships and armoured vehicles as well as more conventional infantry battalions. Players move their units about, creating tactical formations and assaults, with the inevitable confrontations between opposing forces. As the battle goes on, units must be resupplied, tactics altered and all the other guff that goes along with

Breach 2 worthwhile even without the editor, and on that score the game should at least be on the 'take a look' list for all RPG/strategy afficionados, if not a definite purchase.

☆☆☆

BUGS BUNNY CRAZY CASTLE 2

Price **Gameboy £24.99 (Import)**
Genre **Puzzle**
Publisher **Kemco-Seika**

Who the Hell is Honey Bunny™? I must be getting old, because I don't remember Bugs™ ever having a soppy girlfriend. It sounds to me like a lame excuse to rehash the old 'girl kidnapped by witch who must be rescued by hero' scenario to me. In this case it's the hideously ugly Witch Hazel™ who's the wrong doer (now her I do remember), and who has whisked Honey™ away to her castle. Bugs™ must rescue her by hunting through 28 huge rooms of platforms, pipes, ladders and Looney Tunes™ characters. Bugs™ must find the hidden keys in each to unlock the door to the next room. By picking up bombs, axes and so on Bugs™ can blow up those darn 'Toons, hack his way through blocked passages, etc, etc .

Although it looks like a platform game, Crazy Castle 2™ actually plays more like a puzzle game. Success is down to using the items you pick up along the way to get past certain obstacles at the correct place and time. And this part of the game is quite fun.

It's the platformy element that ruins the game - Bugs™ moves in big chunks and is hard to control, and all too infuriatingly often you lose a life by bumping into the baddies by accident. Despite it's good graphics, in my opinion Crazy Castles 2™ is a right stinking load of old Crap™.

☆☆

BURGER TIME DELUXE

Price **GameBoy £29.99 (Import)**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Data East**

Now this is a real blast from the past, when arcade games didn't have to throw punters around like some sub-standard funfair ride just to get them to part with their cash. The player here has to guide tiny Pete the Chef around a network of platforms and ladders. In a bizarre culinary exercise Pete has to make giant hamburgers by walking over the various ingredients lying on the platforms, forcing them to fall down the screen onto the the platform below and eventually onto a plate at the bottom. Once all the hamburgers have been made Pete advances onto the next, more complex arrangement of platforms.

Now this all sounds a bit easy, but you've reckoned without the mutant sausages, gherkins and fried eggs that have escaped from the cupboard and are wandering the platforms intent on Pete's demise. Fortunately the canny chef is armed with a pepper pot and a carefully-aimed shake will stun the baddies for a few moments allowing Pete to make good his escape. More finally, Pete can try to time his food-dropping antics to crush the ingenious ingredients. Burger Time Deluxe is a fun little game, although the graphics verge on the minuscule. It's probably a bit too simplistic for today's younger gamers, but nostalgia buffs will enjoy this tasty slice of the past.

☆☆☆

CAPTAIN PLANET

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Action**
Publisher **Mindscape**

Pass the lentils, man. Thanks. Yeah, like I was telling you there's like this guy, right, and he's like this sort of super-hero, you know. Goes around saving the world from these real heavy breadhead polluters. Yeah, like you say. Heavy shit, man. Anyway, he's got these five helpers, and they're like just kids, you know, but they've got this special rings that give them these cosmic powers. Totally amazing. Each level of the game like centres around one of these six characters, and they're just far out.

I mean like the first character, Ma-Ti, uses her ring to like chill out the bad guys and regrow plants so she can climb up to the level exit. Yeah, and like when she gets out there's this helicopter she has to fly around in and scoop up endangered elephants and take them to a sanctuary. Yeah, exactly. It's like this amazing mix of platform game and shoot-'em-up. Mmmm, yeah, the graphics are sort of cute, the scrolling's fine, and the tunes are neato, but control over your little sprite guy's a bit tricky. Yeah, Tricky Dicky. Watergate. All The President's Men. But you get used to it and all in all it's quite a far-out experience, if not the slickest thing like you've ever seen. Lots of really pretty psychedelic colours, too.

☆☆☆☆

CASTELIAN

Price **GameBoy £29.99 (Import)**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Triffix Entertainment**

Remember *Nebulus*? It was a classy platform game starring a tiny blob called Pogo. Each of its tortuously-difficult levels was set on on a tall tower. The player could move Pogo left and right, and make him jump over game or shoot at the weirdo aliens. However, in a unique twist, the towers used to rotate to follow Pogo's movement. Quite a graphical achievement on the Speccy!

Now *Nebulus* has come to the GameBoy under the title Castelian. And while the name may have changed the game certainly hasn't. It still looks stunning and plays well but has a difficulty rating through the roof. However, completing a tower is extremely satisfying, so if you fancy a real challenge then you know where to come.

☆☆☆☆

CASTLEVANIA IV

Price **Super Famicom £49.99 (Import)**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Konami**

I couldn't believe it when I loaded this up! Imagine it's Christmas (not that difficult really). You're really looking forward to getting a certain present, and you've laid the ground with lots of heavy hints to your parents. Then, on Christmas morning, you get a wrapped gift that looks the same size and shape as the the thing you want. Trouble is, when you open it up there's something totally different inside. Oh, it's a nice enough present all right, just not the one you wanted. Well, that's Castlevania IV. It was great on the NES, brilliant on the Gameboy and, along with CapCom's *Super Ghouls n' Ghosts*, was one on the big anticipated releases on the Super Famicom.

To be fair, Castlevania's a decent enough game - there's lots of running around platforms, ladders and what have you, lots of wopping the bad guys with a giant mace. Unfortunately, what there isn't lots of is fun. The graphics are garish, and the animation is merely perfunctory, with the hero having a rather unfortunate shuffling walk that makes him look as if he's got rags tied to his feet and he's trying to polish the floor. If this had appeared before *SGn'G* then it might have received a better reception. As it happens, it didn't, so it hasn't.

☆☆☆

CELTIC LEGENDS

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Role-Playing Game**
Publisher **Ubi Soft**

It's amazing how you can tell, 99% of the time, what an RPG game is going to be vaguely like just by knowing what part of the world it's coming from. For example, anything that comes from California is likely to be all complex and involved, while anything from, say France or Germany, while still having all the traditional FRP elements, always tends to present things in a much more simplistic and arcadey manner. As is the case here, with this little Gallic number which is very much in the same vein as Thalion's *Dragonflight* and countless other Euro RPGs.

It's actually a fine little game, based around all the old RPG cliches, but handling them with traditional French style and aplomb. It's all set in the mythical world of Celtica, where the misuse of magic by an evil sorcerer has wrenched the kingdom in twain.

What follows is a mix of strategy and conventional RPG elements presented from a number of viewpoints - on the battlefield, high above the world itself and so on, depending upon the scene.

Though in gameplay terms it offers nothing that seasoned fans of the genre will find particularly earth-shattering, it's different enough in terms of presentation and style to make it well worth investigating - especially for novice gamers who may be looking for an accessible and appealing introduction to the genre.

☆☆☆☆

CENTURION - DEFENDER OF ROME

Price **Megadrive £34.99**

Genre **Action Strategy**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

Cast as an aspiring Centurion, it's the player's duty to both defend the homeland and expand the Roman Empire as far afield as possible. This megalomaniacal aim is somewhat foiled at first by the fact that the player starts with just a single legion of soldiers and a city of citizens to keep under control.

The game is a well-judged blend of icon-driven strategy and arcade-style interludes. For example, to keep the subdued provinces happy, the player can take part in chariot races and keep taxes light. As the game progresses the armies under your command grow and ships placed at your disposal to take armies to neighbouring shores become bigger and better. If the player's lucky he can even have a crack at seducing the voluptuous Cleopatra. Poor old Megadrive owners in particular are starved of this type of game, so if you're looking for something to exercise your brain a little, you could do far worse than this.

☆☆☆☆

CHOPLIFTER 2

Price **Gameboy £24.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Nintendo**

Choplifter first appeared in 1983 via Broderbund and is still fondly remembered today. The player's mission as super-crack helicopter pilot is to rescue survivors from a horizontally scrolling warzone. To do this the player must land near the waving refugees and wait for them to board. This can be quite harrowing at times as you're a proverbial sitting duck for all the enemy gun installations and machine-gunning planes which constantly lay siege.

The player's copter is equipped with a rapid-firing cannon and a limited number of bombs with which to protect himself. And that's really all there is to it - however, like *Defender*, Choplifter is one of those games that, once played, is never forgotten. Fast action, challenging game task and a password system help make this one of the best games out on the Gameboy, and a must for any action fans collection.

☆☆☆☆☆

CIVILIZATION

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **MicroProse**

American games design guru Sid Meier, fresh from his success with the brilliant *Railroad Tycoon*, has surpassed himself with this latest effort, which can truly be said to boggle the mind in terms of depth, scale and scope. Adopting the same functional top-down presentation format of *Tycoon*, the game charges the player with the task of building a civilisation, from a bunch of primitive settlers in an unexplored, uncharted world, to a global empire capable of space travel, nuclear power and the other trappings 20th Century life.

The range of factors and elements that play a part in the game is quite simply awesome, as the player's people advances and expands, founding cities, setting sail across the water, making technological discoveries and building armed forces - all while computer-controlled 'rival' empires do the same. Along the way the player must set taxes, maintain civil order, negotiate with other nations, care for the environment and take part in various arms and space races.

Civilization is undoubtedly the most involved strategy game ever conceived, and as such many less commited or novice gamers are likely to be swamped by the game's maze-like intricacies. For those willing to invest the time and effort, however, Civilization pays off like no other. Wonderful.

☆☆☆☆☆

CRIME TIME

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Starbyte**

Crime Time is an attempt to break into 'adventure-without-typing' market cornered by Lucasfilm and Sierra on the IBM PC. Unfortunately, it's not a fraction as good as their wares. The game opens with a moderately-interesting intro which takes along time to tell you that somewhere in the City a crime has been committed (tell us something we don't already know). Well, I say moderately interesting, and it is... the first time around. Unfortunately it can't be skipped and has to be watched everytime the game is loaded. Annoying.

Games Express

VISA

ADVENTURE / ROLE PLAY

Bards Tale Construct. Set	£29.99
Battletech 2: Crescent Hawks	£29.99
Conan the Cimmerian	TBA
Dungeon Master	£29.99
Elvira 2: Jaws of Cerberus	£29.99
Flames of Freedom	£29.99
Heart of China	£29.99
Heroquest	£28.99
Killing cloud	£26.99
Magic Candle 2: 4 & 40	£29.99
Megatraveller 2	£27.99
Planets Edge	£29.99
Police Quest 3	£32.99
Secret of Monkey Island 2	£30.99
Shadow Sorcerer	£29.99
Spellcast 201 (Sorc. Appliance)	£29.99
Star Trek 25th Anv.	£29.99
Twilight 2000	£28.99
Ultima 7	£30.99
Willie Beamish	£32.99

SIMULATIONS

A-10 Tank Killer	£29.99
Chuck Yeager's Air Combat	£25.99
Cybercon 3	TBA
Space Shuttle	TBA
EPIC	£29.99
F117A Stealth Fighter	£30.99
Falcon 3.0	£30.99
Gunship 2000	£29.99
Wing Commander 2	£28.99

SPORT

4-D Sports Driving	£22.99
Battlechess for Windows	£25.99
Chessmaster 3000	TBA
Earl Weaver Baseball 2	£23.99
Formula 1 Grand Prix	£30.99
J Nicklaus Unlimited Golf	£30.99
Links	£30.99
Links Courses	£12.99
Mike Ditka Ult. Football	£30.99
Speedball 2	£25.99
Team Suzuki	£24.99
T LaRussa Ult. Baseball	£25.99

STRATEGY

Bandit Kings of Ancient China	£29.99
Breach 2	£23.99
Civilization	TBA
Elite Plus	£29.99
Floor 13	£28.99
Ghenghis Khan	£29.99
Harpoon	£29.99
Powermonger	£29.99
Railroad Tycoon	£29.99
Sim Earth	£29.99

GENERAL

Lemmings	£25.99
Magnetic Scrolls Pack	£25.99
Sim City / Populous	£25.99
Life and Death 2	£22.99

PC GAMES OUR SPECIALITY!
IF YOU DONT SEE
WHAT YOU WANT
RING US

GAMES EXPRESS Hours Mon - Sat 8am - 9pm
Sun 10am - 6pm

SAME DAY DESPATCH IF ORDERED BEFORE 3pm
SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY

PRICES INCLUDE P&P

GAMES EXPRESS P.O. BOX 515 LONDON SE4 1HE

☎ 081 - 314 0303

DETAILED FREE CATALOGUE & MEMBERSHIP WITH FIRST ORDER

And this over-indulgence on the part of the programmers and lack of thought for the player extends to the game itself. It's a graphic adventure - there's a picture window at the top of the screen and a list of actions and nearby items at the bottom. The idea is the player selects an action with the mouse (i.e. 'Take') and then an item from the list (i.e. 'Key'). While hardly ground-breaking in its innovation, it at least has the virtue of being a system that works reasonably well.

Movement around the game world is by clicking on the points of a compass that also sits at the bottom of the screen. As the player moves from the location to location a new graphic slowly fades in pixel by pixel... painfully slowly. Bad.

The scenery graphics are fine, but drawn at a series of badly-skewed angles for no other reason than to be different, with the end result that they are just painful to look at. On top of that the adventure itself isn't all that interesting either. Strictly one for die-hard adventure fans only - and then only those with money to burn or one letter short of a keyboard.

☆☆

CRUISE FOR A CORPSE

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Delphine/US Gold**

The plot for Cruise for a Corpse is firmly rooted in the Agatha Christie 'isolated location, plenty of suspects' crime story tradition, detailing how the player is invited to a Greek tycoon's yacht for a well-earned holiday only to get there and find his host bumped off by an unknown murderer. Before you can say 'Inspector Wexford' the player is forced to don poncy moustache and tufty sideburns to solve the heinous crime.

After a lot of pre-release interest from the press, there were high hopes for Cruise for a Corpse. Is it the excellent game everyone seemed to think it's be? Well, yes... and no. In the graphics and sound department it's exemplary, with large, fluidly-animated sprites moving over exquisitely detailed backgrounds and plenty of suitable tunes and samples playing away in the background. All conspire to generate an excellent sense of mood and atmosphere.

The player directs his on-screen character ('Raoul') via the mouse. By clicking the mouse pointer on objects of interest, a menu appears listing the various things the player can do with the selected item (i.e. 'Open' or 'Examine' hat box). Movement around the yacht is effected by walking Raoul from location to location by clicking on exits to the current location, such as doors or hallways, or more quickly by calling up the yacht map and 'sending' Raoul immediately from place to place. As a user interface it's difficult to think of another as intuitive and easy to use.

The major problem with Cruise for a Corpse is its pace. The animation, though wondrous, is slow. Examining the contents of a room can become quite painful, as Raoul slowly turns, walks, turns, bends down, examines the item only for a message to appear stating that "There is nothing of interest here". Equally annoying is the frequent though inevitable accessing and swapping of five (count 'em) game disks. All too often the player's enthusiasm for clue hunting can be severely dampened by the reduction of the game's speed to near snail's pace. Less important, some of the generally excellent French-English translation is a bit dubious in places, such as the Cabin Boy who is described as "dynamic".

Those comments apart, anyone with the patience to sit through the occasional doldrums will find Cruise for a Corpse a superb buy, heaped with quality presentation and atmosphere and presenting a big enough game task to satisfy even the greatest sleuth.

☆☆☆☆

DEATHBRINGER

Price **Atari ST £25.99**
Genre **Beat-'Em-Up**
Publisher **Empire**

There's this sword, right. These evil wizards have magically given it the ability to absorb the souls of anyone it slays. Their intention is to use it to get rid off their goody-goody though thicky-thicky nemesis Karn, a barbarian so stupid he can't even spell his own name right. However, luck isn't on the wizards' side, and the sword finds its way into Karn's calloused hands. Hardly believing his luck, Karn sets out to give the sword back to the wizards - in style. Basically it's all a thinly-veiled excuse for a sideways scrolling bloodfest of hacking and slaying, with Karn plowing through wave after wave of bizarro monsters.

Deathbringer boasts some of the most impressive parallax-scrolling backgrounds yet seen, even if they are somewhat lacking in colour. The sprites are well-drawn with a nice line in humour, but they're rather garish in a monochromatic sort of way. But despite its good graphics and adequate sound, Deathbringer's real problem is that it's basically a bit dull. The combat moves are limited in range and slow to implement and just wandering along, endlessly plugging away at the baddies, is not all that interesting. And the prettiest backdrops in the whole World can't make up for that. *Barbarian III* this ain't.

☆☆☆

DEUTEROS

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Activision**

This sequel to *Millennium 2.2* by the same authors is set a thousand years after the prequel's events. Mankind has fallen into a sort of post-technological malaise and forgotten its former space-travelling glory. It's the player's task to rekindle man's passion for the stars and turn the race into the masters of the Galaxy once again. The gameplay boils down to endless resource and manpower allocation between various departments, dealing with the occasional crises that crop up and so on. Although programmed well and moderately enthralling, there really isn't anything on show that hasn't been done more entertainingly elsewhere. Strictly one for the strategy die-hard.

☆☆☆

DEVIL CRASH

Price **Megadrive £39.99 (Import)**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Tecno Soft**

Computerised pinball has never been a particularly popular genre - and a quick glance at Devil Crash is enough to make you see why. Ever since the age-old days of *Slamball* and *Time Scanner*, coin-ops and home machines have tried to emulate that seedy tilt-n'-slam pinball feel, but with little success. In theory, it should work excellently, with the binary format allowing for all sorts of tricks and wizardry that wouldn't be possible on a real machine. Unfortunately, no amount of gimmicks can make up for the fact that pinball on a computer screen just doesn't compare to the exhiliration of a real table.

To its credit, Devil Crash actually does a better job than most, with credible ball inertia and plenty of interesting features - the table is some three screens long and packed with all manner of secret rooms, bonuses and other bits. Unfortunately the gothic nature of the graphics (pentangles and mystic runes aplenty) lend a rather depressing and messy feel to the game itself, and as a result it's difficult to really enjoy. Devil Crash is the aesthetic equivalent of a bad headache. Whatever its shortcomings, however, computer pinball has acquired a respectable cult following for itself, and gamers of that persuasion will no doubt find Devil Crash to be one of the more impressive examples of the genre. For the rest of us, however, there are more enjoyable - and less frustrating - bits of plastic on the market.

☆☆☆

DEVIOUS DESIGNS

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Puzzle**
Publisher **Image Works**

Hmmm, not so much devious as simply fiddly. Ever since the world went *Tetris* mad, there's been a steady trickle of arcade puzzlers trying to tap into that elusive addictive ingredient that made Alexey Pajitnov's classic such a wallet-filling money spinner. Devious Designs had more potential than most, but it hasn't quite been realised.

The basic idea is simple enough. The player guides a tiny figure around various landscapes, picking up variously-shaped blocks and trying to slot them onto a transparent template, whilst collecting bonuses, a myriad of power ups and avoiding or shooting the swirling bad guys. All well and good. Ah, but there's more to it than that. On the later levels, the player can make his character walk up the walls and even on the ceiling. And this is where it all starts to fall apart.

Control over the player's character is generally fine, but when near a wall it's all too easy to find yourself clambering up when you didn't want to and not clambering up when you did.

Admittedly, given a fair deal of practice the player should be able to compensate for this fiddliness, but in the short-term it mars an otherwise enjoyable and reasonably addictive addition to the genre.

☆☆☆

DOUBLE DRAGON 3

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Beat-'Em-Up**
Publisher **Storm**

Double Dragon fans have been more than short-changed in the past by the conversions of the previous two Double Dragon coin ops, so it comes as some relief to be able to say that this - the third instalment of the on-going fisty-cuff escapades of Jimmy and Billy Lee - is, despite a couple of reservations, pretty much what devotees have been waiting for.

The plot is confused to say the least. According to who you listen to, it's either the usual girly rescue mission, or a quest for treasure, or a fight against the 'Ultimate Evil'. No matter - the mechanics remain the say. Jimmy and Billy Lee (a.k.a. players one and two) have to fump and crump their way through fourteen levels of action set in five exotic locations (and as the game progresses you'll discover 'exotic' is an understatement).

Players start the game with fifteen 'coins', and in the shops found en route the player can buy extra lives, weapons, power ups and even some fancy new fighting moves. It's a shame you can't just find weapons along the way, but this coins business does at least adds a game-enhancing strategy element, because the player has to decide how best to spend his cash.

While some may find the gameplay dated and repetitive (a complaint, to be fair, that could be made about most games of this type), those eponymous 'fans of the genre' should be revelling in one of the more exciting and certainly the slickest slices of beat-'em-up action around. And, for my money, it's far better than *Final Fight*.

☆☆☆☆

E.A. HOCKEY

Price **Megadrive £34.99**
Genre **Sports Arcade**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

Like *Kick Off* with fighting in, Electronic Arts' Hockey will appeal to everyone. A section of teams from around the globe, each wit their own abilities and weaknesses battle it out in the Ice hockey World League.

Following on from their success with *John Madden's Football*, EA pull yet another winner our of the bag with this, perhaps their most frenetic title to date.

Having selected the length of game, whether the player wishes to compete in a one-off match or a knock-out, selected his team and that of the enemy, it's game on! Skating around the rink is simple enough, and control over the puck is surprisingly instinctive. Since the rink is so small and the players can move so swiftly and violently against each other, Ice Hóckey is an extremely rapid, high scoring game. Basically, whoever gets the puck from the face-off is most likely to score. Until, of course, the player gets the hang of the wide variety of tackling moves available to him, from a good honest going-for-the-puck scenario to a full body check.

Rile an opposition player on a too-regular basis, though, and you'd better be ready to put your fist where his mouth is, as one of the features included is brawling. While the rest of your team are trying to do some good, it's possible to clang away at that guy who skated over your shoes for as long as you like! A graphic and gameplay marvel, E.A. Hockey is wholeheartedly recommended to one and all. Hooray!

☆☆☆☆☆

ELF

Price **Amiga £25.95**
Genre **Arcade Adventure**
Publisher **Ocean**

As Cornelius the Elf, it's the player's task to rescue his sweetheart Elisa from the pointy-nailed clutches of Necrilous the Not Very Nice. The game takes place over six Tolkien-esque levels filled with platforms, pitfalls, ladders and bridges. Cornelius' magic powder allows him to protect himself from Necrilous' rampant horde of henchcreatures by firing bolts of magic energy. Numerous interest-sustaining spells and power-ups can be bought from Ye Olde Localle Shoppe using cash picked up along the way.

Each massive maze-like level pre-

GOOD SNOGGING GUIDE
0898 800 207
NAUGHTY JOKELINE
0898 800 240
CONFESSION LINE
0898 800 209
SMUTTY JOKES
0898 800 206
CHAT-UP LINES
0898 800 213
ULTRA NAUGHTY JOKELINE
0898 800 205
HORROR LINE
0898 800 208
SOUNDS OF TORTURE
0898 800 214
Your ideal LOVE PARTNER
0898 800 212

Calls cost 36p/min cheap rate 48p/min at all other times Please ask your parents permission before calling. Buzz 77 Blythe Rd W14 0HP

GAMEMAGICK

GAMEMAGICK
CAVERN WALKS
MATHEW STREET
ST LIVERPOOL
L2 6RE

ORDER HOTLINE
051 227 1977
9.00am - 6.00pm
AFTER EVENING HOTLINE
STRICTLY ORDERS
6.30pm - 8.00pm
051 709 6226

SEGA MEGADRIVE.........£129.99
WITH A CHOICE OF ANY GAMES LISTED BELOW FOR.........£35.00

QUACKSHOT.........£34.00
DEVILS CRASH.........£34.00
MERCS.........£34.00
RUNARK (Indina Jones).........CA.LL
ROBOCOD (USA).........CA.LL
ROAD RASH (USA).........£37.00
FATAL REWIND (USA).....£33.00
SPIDERMAN.........£31.00
F22 INTERCEPTOR (USA)£24.00
BUCK RODGERS (USA).........CA.LL
RING OF POWER (USA).........CA.LL
PGA TOUR GOLF (USA)...£37.00
JOHN MADDEN II (USA)...£36.00
FIGHTING MASTER.........£35.00
LAKERS V'S CELTICS (USA)....£35.00
DOUBLE DRAGON II.........CA.LL
CD ROM (SCART ONLY).........CA.LL

ALL ABOVE GAMES ARE JAP CARTRIDGES UNLESS OTHERWIASE STATED.

JAP TO UK ADAPTOR.....£11.99

NINTENDO SUPER FAMICOM

ACTRAISER UK (HINTS).£29.99

F-ZERO.........£35.00

GAMEBOY .... JAP

GHOSTBUSTERS II.........£21.00
SUPERMARIO LAND.........£21.00
HATRIS.........£21.00
MICKEY MOUSE II.........£21.00
NEMISIS II.........£21.00
BUBBLE BOBBLE.........£21.00
CHASE H.Q.........£21.00
CASTLEVANIA II.........£23.00
DRAGONS LAIR.........£21.00
PACMAN.........£21.00
POPEYE II (HOT).........£23.00
TMNT II (HOT).........£23.00
NINJA RYUKENDEN.........£22.00

GAME GEAR ....JAP

DONALD DUCK (LUCKY DIME)....£24.99
NINJA GAIDEN.........£24.99
AXE BATTLER.........£24.99

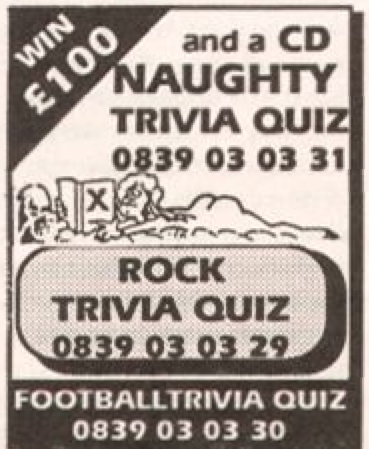
PARADISE OF KUNICHAN£24.99

P & P £1 PER GAME
£10 PER CONSOLE

4 GAMES IN 1 COLUMNS, TENNIS

WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ALTER PRICES WITHOUT NOTIFICATION. ALLOW 5 DAYS FOR CHEQUES TO CLEAR - PAYABLE TO GAME MAGICK.

VISA



5p per 8 secs cheap rate 6 secs other times
Questel PO Box 3000 London N20 NRB
Please ask permission before you call

WIN! CASIO POCKET COLOUR TV
0839 44 22 70

WIN! SEGA GAME GEAR
0839 44 22 73

WIN! NIKE AIR JORDAN VI's
0839 44 22 74

Questel PO Box 3000 London N20 NRB
5p per 8 secs cheap rate 6 secs other times

sents its own unique set of problems to solve and tasks to achieve, requiring that the player constantly evolve new strategies to deal with them. All in all Elf is a polished high-quality romp, perfect for platform or arcade adventure fans.

☆☆☆☆

EPIC

Price **Atari ST £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Ocean**

Boy, has this one been a long time in the making. I can remember magazines breathlessly previewing this about a year and a half ago (and I think ACE was one of them). It's strange that it should finally appear around the same time as EA's *Birds of Prey* (see this months Review Directory), another game thought long lost in the Bermuda Triangle that is known as software development.

Anyway, it's here now so what's it like. Well, to be frank, it's a tiny bit disappointing. The last remnants of the human race are all bundled up in a fleet of space ships, fleeing through space to escape the sun which is just about to go nova. The only escape route lies through the heart of the hostile Empire of the Rexxons, a vicious reptilian race of aliens. As pilot of Earth's Tip Top Secret starfighter, it's up to the player to see the fleet to safety.

This plot forms the framework for the game's eight missions, some of which take place in space, the rest of which take place on the surfaces of various planets. Although depicted in super-smooth solid-polygon 3D (courtesy of Digital '*F-29*' Image Design), the emphasis is fimrly on shoot-'em-up rather than spurious simulation.

Depending on how the player performs in the various missions, the plot varies accordingly, but it's very limited and never really deviates from the linear path. Epic is all very exciting - the sheer scale of some of the space battles is stunning - and control over the ship is superb, but you can't help wishing there was a little more to the game than just blowing everything up. A touch more depth and this would have been a classic. Still, if you're looking for a high-class, no-nonsense 3D blaster then Epic's your game. Personally, I'm holding out for *Epic 2*.

☆☆☆☆

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER 2

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Role-Playing Game**
Publisher **SSI/US Gold**

The first Eye of the Beholder, along with its inspiration *Dungeon Master*, can largely be thanked (or held responsible, depending on your view of this genre) for bringing RPGs spluttering and staggering out of the darkened bedroom of the anorak-- and glasse-wearing social retard and into the bright daylight of critical acclaim and public acceptance.

This style of RPG banished forever the notion that these games should only consist of functional graphics and reams of statistics, depicting the action in detailed 3D graphics, with all the number-crunching handled by the computer rather than the player.

Beholder 2 continues the tradition of the first, being good to look at, easy to use and - most importantly - fun and exciting to play. To be honest, the real improvements over the first game are few and subtle, and it's still a shame that the various beasties son't have a few more animation frames lavished on their attack animations, but that won't put off the fans keen to resume their adventures in the land of Darkmoon, nor should it deter newcomers from making their first trip. Highly recommended.

☆☆☆☆☆

F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II

Price **Atari ST/Amiga/IBM PC £29.99**
Genre **Simulations**
Publisher **MicroProse**

MicroProse make a departure from their usual rigorously-accurate sims with this action-orientated affair. It's the flight sim equivalent of the Janet and John books, i.e. nice n' simple with no complications. Players have six combat arenas to choose between, each with various missions to select. These missions are nearly all simple 'get in, destroy a couple of targets and get out alive' jobs, with the player have to simultaneously defend against swarms of enemy jets. Control is via keyboard, joystick or mouse and is highly responsive in each case.

The screen update is fast enough but there are quicker 3D routines about - it's more than adequate for the job in hand, however. Sound is disappointing, with a white-noise hiss being being the player's only audio companion for most of the journey. In the gameplay department this is a winner, with plenty of white-knuckle action to get the adrenalin pumping. Veterans may bemoan the game's lack of depth, but anyone else should find this just their cup of tea, with a yummy Jammy Dodger in the saucer to boot.

☆☆☆☆

FACE OFF

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Sport Game**
Publisher **Krisalis**

There aren't that many Ice Hockey games available on the Amiga. In fact, there aren't any. So Face Off is something of a welcome addition to the canon of sports games. Worth getting? Well, yes and no. Like *Manchester United Europe*, it's a very polished game, with some super slick menu and option screens. There's a league to participate in, where the player can do anything from train the players to rename the manager. And like *MUE*, the player can turn off the arcade game and concentrate on the managerial side of things if they're that way inclined, or alternatively just play the arcade game alone.

The arcade side of things is okay, although some may wish the action had just a touch more zip. Certainly compared to *E.A. Hockey* it's distinctly sluggish. Control is simple and easy to pick up - shoot, pass or thump via the joystick - and the sport is fun, especially when things get a little physical and the fists start flying. As standard on most sports games these days there's a replay function so that that blistering goal can be replayed again and again. Overall, Face Off is a rounded package, though unlikely to exactly grab the public's imagination. Fans of the sport will enjoy it, but just how many of them are there in the UK?

☆☆☆☆

FATAL REWIND

Price **MegaDrive £34.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Psygnosis/Electronic Arts**

Psygnosis disappoints nobody with its first foray onto the 16-bit consoles, maintaining the same high quality of graphics and sound that's made it the legend it is in the Amiga market. And thankfully in this case there's the gameplay to back up the visuals. But if *The Killing Game Show* had to be renamed for its transition from the Amiga to the MegaDrive, couldn't they have come up with something a little better than Fatal Rewind? Apart from the fact that it doesn't actually mean much, it's a fairly obvious attempt to sound like *Total Recall*, a film which bears no resemblance to this game at all.

The player is put in charge of a mechanical walker reminiscent of the ED-209s in *Robocop*. An agile little thing, it can run left and right, jump, fire and even climb up the sides of walls. Things they can do nowadays, huh? The player has to negotiate a network of platforms in the hunt for the exit to the next level. Aliens fly on from all sides, swirling and swarming about the screen with the sole intent of seeing the player bite the dust. And just to give the player a touch more incentive to escape the platforms are slowly sinking into a deadly red sea. The need to find keys to certain areas adds a small amount of depth to the game,, but these arcade adventure elements never swamp what is basically a very classy and addictive shoot-'em-up.

☆☆☆☆

FIGHTER COMMAND

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Impressions**

It may be a little late to cash in on Operation Desert Storm, but there can be no doubting Fighter Command's topicality. Set in the present day Middle East, it puts the player in the shiny shoes of an allied air commander who's been given a simple task - kick the stuffing out of the aggressive enemy as quickly and violently as possible. But despite the pretty picture of a jet pilot coming into land on the box, there's not actually any flight-sim type action in the game at all. It's 100% pure strategy, with the player making all his decisions from a series of control rooms, screens and offices. Everything is presented by simplistic overhead camera views, tactical screens and radar displays.

Everything you'd expect from a military strategy game is in there - you sweep the area with reconnaissance satellites to find out where everything is, then organise and launch attacks against chosen targets. There's a wide range of kit available, including stealth bombers, fighters and helicopters from various air forces along with exocet, patriot and scud missiles. As the game progresses, the player has to keep tabs on political developments, fuel and equipment resources and all kinds of other factors which govern the game world.

Actually, considering there's rarely anything really exciting going on on-screen, Fighter Command does quite a good job of holding the player's attention. Most of the screens are static, nothing's really very immediate and it takes time to learn the basics, but despite all this it's still strangely compelling. There's plenty to do, lots of strategy to get the head round and generally it's all very jolly. The lack of any real flight action is a major setback, and it's because of this that many gamers may prefer to wait for Microprose's forthcoming *ATAC*. In The Works'd this month.

☆☆☆

FINAL BLOW

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Storm**

I actually went to a boxing match a couple of months back and people in the crowd were genuinely shouting "Hit him!" as if it was some sort of useful tactic which their chosen fighter should employ. One suspects those are exactly the sort of folks who spend more than a couple of quid on Final Blow in the arcades. Nothing wrong with the celebration of the noble art, and nothing wrong with having a right old clanging session in the process, but Final Blow has more to do with seeing who can hit Fire the fastest than boxing.

Although the players are endowed with plenty of moves and the ability to block punches, the speed of the game completely removes any sort of finesse which, after all, is what boxing is all about. Even Mike Tyson would concentrate on different areas of the body. Hit them in the ribs enough to make them lower their guard, and then go to work on their face. No such accuracy in Final Blow, since the flurry of computerised and human arms makes it impossible to see who's arms are who's. The result is a non-stop battle of stick-slamming frustration. About the only way to work out who's being hit is by watching the energy bar at the bottom of the screen.

So far as a coin-op conversion goes, it's a pretty good job, and in two-player mode it's alright for a laugh, but the original was far from perfect. Amiga owners may be wise to hold on for a more rounded game.

☆☆☆

FINAL FIGHT

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Beat-'Em-Up**
Publisher **US Gold**

Yet another in US Gold's seemingly endless string of CapCom conversions. In Metro City (loosely based on Noo Yoik) all is not well. Crime is rife and to make a bad situation worse the Mayor's right-dreamy daughter has been kidnapped by - you guessed it - Mr Big. (This old Mr Big certainly gets around, doesn't he?) The player and optional partner have to fist-fight their ways through the city's wastelands to rescue her. Why? Why not?

Final Fight is something of a first for beat-'em-ups on the home computer, i.e. it's actually quite good. The sprites are large and decently animated, the background scroll is smooth and the action is fast. Someone of the detecting whether a punch connects or not is a little dodgy, but apart from that this can be recommended unreservedly to anyone who fancies a little aggro without bruising their knuckles.

☆☆☆☆

FIRST SAMURAI

Price **Amiga £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Image Works**

This is the way that arcade adventures should be made! Succeeding in producing a game with the steriod-power of Schwarzenegger and some puzzle-solving too, Image Works have come up with a winning formula.

The player must avenge the foul murder of his Ninja Master by chasing the evil Demon King through 24th Century Japan.

On top of all the regular hacking ans slashing that you would expect to find in an arcade adventure, there are Special Items, which can be used a little like playing a joker in It's A Knockout and can summon the spirit of your murdered Mage-mate to help you though some of the more tricky situations.

While it could be said that the last thing the world needs is another martial arts game or another collect-the-objects adventure, First Samurai carefully sidesteps the argument by blending both styles in an effective and appealing way, keeping both hardcore killers and those with more cerebral intentions happy.

☆☆☆☆☆

FLICKY

Price **Megadrive £34.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Sega**

"Don't be put off by the screenshots on the back of the box" is probably the best bit of advice I can give about Flicky. It looks awful - tiny primary-colour sprites and garish backdrops. And to be honest, things don't improve much in the game itself. However, like Quasimodo, an ugly appearance conceals the goodness inside.

The player controls the tiny bird of the title. The lickle darling's chicks have gone and got themselves lost in the rooms of a giant cat-infested house. Flicky has to run and jump about, collect her scattered brood and take them to the safety of the Exit, while avoiding the prowling felines. Flicky is a wonderfully playable game, very simple but packed with fun. Some may dispute whether there's £35-worth of fun, but for those with the cash it's a good purchase.

☆☆☆☆

FLOOR 13

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Virgin Games**

The myth that strategy games are boring has been well and truly exploded by a game that's likely to convert even confirmed trigger-addicts to a more staple and intelligent software diet. Floor 13 offers a new slant on the strategy genre by basing itself around a compelling scenario and offering gameplay that goes beyond the regular strategy framework.

Set in present-day Britain, it tells of a government-run secret police force that must avert scandals, wipe out subversive elements and generally protect the government from embarrassing incidents so that it doesn't fall from grace. As Director General of this corrupt agency, the player is solely responsible for its operations.

The game is played almost entirely from a single static screen of an office desk, onto which intelligence reports and newspaper stories arrive from the outside world and form the basis of the information which the player works from as plots and storylines unfold. Various sub-departments, such as surveillance, interrogation and disinformation are the instruments of the player's will, with shady agents tailing suspects, tapping phones, searching premises and even torturing and killing people to achieve the government's immoral aims.

The way in which the game reveals information as half-clues and red herrings mean that good detective work and thorough cross-checking of intelligence data is as important as the conventional strategic skills which are also required. It's all thoroughly absorbing, very realistic stuff, and comes highly recommended, even to those who can't normally stand strategy games.

☆☆☆☆☆

FOOTBALL DIRECTOR II

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **D&H Games**

Yaaaaaawn. Don't get me wrong, I've got nothing against football - there's just something implicitly boring about management games of this type. Player Manager is the exception to the rule, firstly because it's so excellent and secondly because you got to play *Kick Off* with it, which made it doubly excellent. When faced with something like this, though, it's difficult to imagine anybody but the most desperate sort of gamer or die-hard footy fan actually getting any enjoyment out of it.

Technically of course, there's nothing to fault it, and the depth that the game goes into is commendable - you've got your league and cup trophies, financial problems, player injuries, team tactics, talent scouts, stadium management and all the rest of it. On the aesthetic side, however, nothing much seems to have changed since the days when these games were prevalent on the Spectrum about three or four years ago.

These days, however, the cheapo graphics and sound just don't cut it any more, do when something like this comes along it seems like a bit of an embarrassment, really. But of course it's the gameplay that counts and for what it is, Football Director is entertaining enough, and providing you're not expecting too much and willing to give the game some time, it should pay off handsomely. The wiser members of the computerised football-management fraternity will probably want to save their pennies for *Player Manager 2*, however.

☆☆☆

FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £34.99**
Genre **Racing Simulation**
Publisher **MicroProse**

Believe you me, you've never seen a racing game like this. *Lotus 2? OutRun Europa? Indianapolis 500?* Pah! They are but children's toys compared to the complete and utter excellence of Formula One Grand Prix, the latest and greatest game from the programming genius that is Geoff '*Stunt Car Racer*' Crammond. The graphics are truly amazing, with highly-detailed cars (complete with driver's helmet poking out of the cockpit) literally zooming around tracks lined with stands, trees, fences and cranes. The sound matches the visuals, with good use made of throaty samples for the engine.

But it's not just the quality of the graphics or the sounds that makes F1GP so special, it's the meticulous attention to detail that generates an authentic and involving Grand Prix atmosphere. Everything you'd expect to find on a Grand Prix circuit - stands, bridges, tunnels, etc - is there (and in the identical position they'd be found in real life), even extending right down to stewards pushing crippled cars off the track and engineer crews waiting in the pits.

The wonderful control over the car is the essential icing on the cake, with plenty of difficulty modifiers to make the game easy enough for Granny Smith to play or tough enough to bring Sterling Moss out in beads of sweat. Indeed, so good is F1GP that it earned itself an ACE Trailblazer and the honour of becoming the new Racing Simulation Benchmark. Good enough for you?

☆☆☆☆☆

FUZZBALL

Price **Amiga £19.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **System 3**

Well, this is a bit of class from the past and no mistake. Refreshingly free from pretension, System 3's latest is a simple yet hugely addictive platform affair. The player controls a bouncing ball of fluff that has to be guided around a network of platforms, collecting fruity bonuses. Enemy sprites, the Fuzzballs of the title, try to stop him. These come in four increasingly-aggressive 'flavours': green, purple, black and red. By repeatedly shooting them with his blob gun, the player can stun them long enough to knock them off the platform. However, if the player takes too long the Fuzzball comes to but even nastier than before.

As the player progresses through the fifty-odd levels more and badder Fuzzballs appear, unkillable monsters start bouncing around and the platform leaps provide an even greater test of the player's pixel-perfect positioning powers. Fuzzball is a classic example of 'simple being good'. The addictive, uncluttered gameplay and cute graphics make this an A-grade winner. And there's a right dreamy animated intro to boot. (Well, you've got to fill those big boxes with something, haven't you?)

☆☆☆☆☆

THE GAMES - WINTER CHALLENGE

Price **IBM PC £29.99**
Genre **Sport Simulation**
Publsiher **Accolade**

This is, as our rad friends would say, mega-wicked! It appeared in the post, totally unexpected, and turns out to be one of the best games we've seen this month! Yeah, seriously! The player (or players - up to ten can take part) compete in eight winter sports - luge, down-

TECHNOMANIA

Commodore Amiga Cartoon Classics Plus Pack

3 Great Games
Lemmings (Psygnosis' Smash Hit)
The Simpsons versus the Space Mutants
Captain Planet and the Plannteers

Also Deluxe Paint III (Electronic Arts Superb Art Package) and Computer comes with 1MB Chip Ram on board as standard.

£ 369.99

Commodore Amiga 1500

1 Megabyte of memory, two 3.5" disk drives and the following software:

Toki, Elf & Puzznic. Home Accounts & the Works (integrated word processor, spreed sheet and database)
£599.00
With Phillips CM8833 Mk2 Colour Monitor
£829.99

Atari 520 STE Discovery Xtra Pack
512k of memory, 3.5 " Disk Drive
Four games included:
Final Fight, Sim City, Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters and 9 Lives.

£304.99

1040 STE Family Curriculum Pack
1024K of memory, 3.5" Disk Drive
Five modules of educational software:
Play & Learn, Junior School, GCSE Revision, Creativity & Business

£374.99

MONITORS

Commodore 1084S................**£259.99**

Phillips CM 8833 Mk 2 (inc cable, free copy of F19 and one year on site maintenance)................**£244.99**

PRINTERS
(all printers include cable)

Citizen 120D+	£124.99
Citizen 124D	£189.99
Citizen Swift 9 Colour	£189.99
Citizen Swift 24 E Colour	£289.99
Canon BJ10E X	£249.99
Star LC20	£149.99
Star LC200 mono	£254.99
Star LC24-200 mono	£259.99
Star LC24-200 colour	£299.99

AMIGA ACCESSORIES

Cumana CAX354 External Disk Drive	£59.99
512K memory upgrade with clock	£29.99
Squick Replacement Mouse	£14.99
Naksha Mouse with Operation Stealth	£26.99
Dataflyer 500 fitted with 52mb Hard Drive	£299.99
105 MB	£439.99
GVP series 2 52MB	£379.99
VXL030 25mhz Accelerator Board for Amiga 500, 1500 & 2000	£244.99
KCS PC Emulator	£219.99

Many other products available. Please phone for a price on your specific requirement.

All prices include 17.5 % VAT and Next Day Delivery on Larger Items

TECHNOMANIA
13 WELLBURN STREET
DUNDEE, TAYSIDE
DD2 2RR
TEL : 0382 22323
FAX : 0382 400444

VISA

Please allow five working days for cheque clearance. Prices are subject to change without prior notice. Orders recieved by 3 pm despatched same day.

hill skating, cross-country skating, speed skating, bobsled, giant slalom, biathlon and ski jump. All the events are depicted in an effective mix of 3D polygons for the landscape (a bit like *Midwinter*) with sprites for the competitors and course scenery (trees, fences, etc). Sound is less impressive - on a basic PC the game is played almost in silence except for a between-game tune and a crowd cheer when a player completes an event.

The player views the action from just behind and above his on-screen alter-ego, therefore getting a good view of the action as well as an excellent first-person impression of speed. Each of the events is relatively easy to control and consequently very easy to get into. Like the Epyx *'Games'* series, success is dependent on timing and control rather than hammering the fire button, so it's very satisfying to play and makes shaving seconds off those best times more a matter of skill as opposed to physical stamina.

Despite its superior qualities, The Games may get a bit dull when played alone (a criticism levelled at nearly every game of this type). However, as a game to play with a group of friends it's near flawless - and that makes The Games a more than worthy purchase to play over this Xmas holiday period.

☆☆☆☆☆

GUNSHIP 2000

Price **IBM PC £39.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **MicroProse**

Nobody writes simulations like Microprose does. This is a highly-realistic sequel to the company's earlier mega-hit *Gunship*, which has gone done in software history as one of the best-selling sims ever. This sequel is far more than just *Gunship+*. Every part of the game has been given a radical overhaul.

Probably the most impressive aspect is the revamped graphics system. Using a sort of patchwork-quilt landscaping technique, the gameworld has been modelled in exacting detail, complete with rise, hills, mountains, valleys, cuttings. If it's a geographical feature, it's there. As usual, the game takes the form of a series of pilot-testing missions. Unfortunately this complexity means that you really need at least a 16MHz PC to get anything approaching speed from the game. Sound with a board is marvelously atmospheric, and adds no end to the gritty battlefield feel.

The 'copter control is good, but actually getting the craft to fly matches that of the real thing, i.e. it's very difficult, and certainly makes Gunship 2000 not the sort of game to cut your sim-playing teeth on. However, if you're looking for the ultimate chopper simulation, then here it is.

☆☆☆☆☆

HARD NOVA

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Role-Playing Game**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

Hard Nova's a game that's difficult to categorise. Like *Starflight 2* it's a mixture of styles, boasting strategy as well as role-playing elements, adventure as well arcade space-flight sequences. It's the sort of stuff that Electronic Arts in America have been churning out for years - science fiction odysseys with alien worlds, sleazy mutant characters, big spaceships clanging together and all the rest of it. There's supposedly a comic edge to this one, with the player taking on the persona of wisecracking space bitch Hard Nova.

You can interact with characters, RPG-fashion, collect objects, do missions and trek across the galaxy, kidnapping, ferrying cargo from planet to planet and so on and so forth.

It sounds like a bit of a cop out, but if this sort of malarkey is your cup of tea, then you're liable to have a lot of long-lasting fun with it - it's just a shame that the vast majority of gamers don't have the patience to get into it. Well worth checking out - the game's got plenty of atmosphere (ho ho!), and gets progressively more involving the longer it's played. Just don't expect to pick it up straight away.

☆☆☆

HEIMDALL

Price **Amiga (1Mb) £34.99**
Genre **Arcade Adventure**
Publisher **Core Design**

After a long string of shoot'em-ups and platform games (*Car-Vup, Frenetic, Chuck Rock*), Core Design has returned to more involving territory with Heimdall, an isometric arcade adventure cum role playing game based around Viking lore.

READERS PAGES

FOR SALE

Amiga KCS Powerboard including manuals. Boxed as new. Sell for £120. Tel (0656) 861134 evenings.

Amiga 500, CM8833, Monitor, Joysticks, Books, 11/2 MB Upgrade, Loadsagames. Sell for £400 ONO Tel 0847 62633 evenings, Scott.

Megadrive £220, 8 games, joypad 2 apaptors. Atari ST 520FM, 50 games, mouse, joystick £310 O.N.O. David 081 863 6964.

Amiga 500 retail £1000, includes 1 Meg expansion£550 Software, 2 joysticks, all necessities. £499 O.N.O. 0666 840015 after 7pm.

Amiga 1 Meg (3 months) with 35+ games, worth £1100, for sale at £450. Contact Yoshi, 29 Gladstone Street Kettering Northants NN16 OTE. Hurry!

HELP LINE

Please help me. I am having major prolems trying to sell my cheats disk. Over 300 cheats from the last 2 years are on it. Written using ST writer and costs £1. Or 50p if you send your own disk for a copy. Write to: Jon Treby, Five acres, Greenfield road, Pulloxhill, Bedford, MK45 5EY. Also are you having problems with your games? If so I can send you written replies to games such as Gods, Xenon 2, Lemmings, Kick Off 2 etc. So come on, get writing!

Help needed please with Bloodwych on S.T. Help given with Indy and Last Crusade. Tel: 0909 565468.

Please could you send me reviews, ratings, best buys list, and cheats for any games on the Nintendo, Gameboy or reviews, ratings, best buyers list and cheats for the Atari 2600 contact: Wayne Kavanagh, Ballyuade, Oula, Co Tipperary, Eine.

In urgent need for the complete solution of the C64's The Hobbit. I also would like to know if there's a cheat for C64's Elite (no pokes please). Here's some more games on the C64 I need help with: *Midnight* Resistance, Shadow Warriors, Barbarian II, Powerama and Vindicator. Please write to: 21 Sylvester Avenue, Heavlley, Stockport.

Stuck on any of these adventures: Batman-The caped crusader, Goldrush, Guild of Thieves, Hitch-Hikers Guide To The Galaxy, Indy-Last Crusade, Jinxter, Kings Quest 1+2+3, Larry 1+2+3, Lurking Horror, Maniac Mansion, Manhunter-New York, The Pawn, Police Quest 2 Beast 1+2, Snoopy, Space Ace, Space Quest 1+2+3, Zac Mc-Kracken, Zork 1+2+3 & Zork Zero. If so send list of solutions you want and a postal order for 1 pound solution, payable to G.R.Payne. With a stamped S.A.E (A5 size) To: G.R.Payne, 42 Overbury Cresent, New Addington, Croydon, Surry, CR0 0LN.

Help!!! I search people to exchange games with (I.B.M. games). Please send me your list of games: Ido Admon, 26 Averbuch Street, Bamat-Hasharon 47400, Israel.

PEN PALS

Howdy! ST Penpals wanted all over world especially USA. But not from Finland, AM, Kyrolan Tie, 4-6 C25, 04420 Jarvenpaa, Finland, END.

Swapper, Virus Expert, Sysop? U like Swapping? Send a letter to me! Contacts: Mikko Kultakanta Juhulank 34 BB 04400 Jakven8AA Finland.

The Heimdall of the title is a human gift from the Gods, sent to Earth by Odin to recover the three great weapons that will vanquish the forces of evil. After selecting a crew from the varied characters available, Hemidall sets sail across the Nordic waters to destinations unknown.

For the most part, the game is yer basic isometric adventure à la *The Immortal*, although there are some interesting strategic and FRP elements - all the characters have differing skills, which means that the player must switch between them, as in a conventional RPG, to perform certain tasks. The strategy is provided by the seafaring section, where the player must travel between the various islands (there are three archipelagos, each hiding one of the ehtereal weapons and each forming an independent level) in the most efficient manner.

Heimdall is a fun adventure game, although the action, due to the product's FRP overtones, is a little slower and less exciting than most of its counterparts in the genre. In fact, there are times when very little seems to be happening at all, and only those who are willing to buckle down, make maps and all the rest of it, are likely to enjoy the game to the full.

That said, it's been designed with the utmost care and cleverness, and there's enough here to kep anybody glued to the screen for some considerable time. A fine game.
☆☆☆☆☆

HUDSON HAWK

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Ocean**

Bruce Willis' film was a disaster, and Ocean hadn't turned out anything of note in the film conversion stakes for quite a while, so nobody was really expecting very much out of Hudson Hawk. But instead of the usual cynical and barely-playable licence, what we got was the best platform game so far this year. Special FX took a big gamble in its interpretation of the film by chucking 99% of the source material out of the window, and getting on with the business of just building a good game around the film's basic premise - that of a cat burglar stealing valuable artifacts from around the world.

It works superbly, in much the same style as former platform classics like *Mario*, *Rick Dangerous* and *Switchblade*, with small, comical characters playing over tortuously-designed platform levels. It's a class act, without a doubt, with fiendish traps and pitfalls lurking around every corner. The gameplay is easily up to console/arcade standard, and the graphics and sound really do enhance the fun factor because they're so jolly. Don't be put off by the shoddy licence connotations - Hudson Hawk is a brilliant game in its own right and deserves a place in your collection. Today.
☆☆☆☆☆

HUNTER

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Action Strategy**
Publisher **Activision**

It's a sad old world, this one we live in. Just when poor old Activision get some decent product together, their Mediagenic daddy goes and pulls the plug on them. Now, however, after the aforementioned 'decent product' has been swilling around doing very little indeed for the last few months, Activision's current putter-outer of games, The Disc Company have taken it upon themselves to let another trickle of gameyness reach the streets.

Hunter is the sort of game that you dream of playing. A polygon based action strategy game will all of the usually associated nonsense removed, it offers all the "wouldn't it be great if..." features which should, by rights, be included in all these games.

Taking the role of the Hunter, the player must travel around a bunch of islands, systematically destroying all enemy installations in whatever way he sees fit. Your particular mission is detailed in a briefing where specific, immediate targets are detailed by your allied commander.

The best thing about Hunter is that there's no messing about. If you want to infiltrate an enemy base, get a disguise and you're away! If you want to get about, steal a helicopter/jeep/truck or sailboard. It's all so easy and because the unnecessary complexity of basic tasks has been removed, the player can concentrate on progressing with the mission much more intently.

Excellent graphics and a fast-paced storyline can only add to Hunter's already awe-inspiring style. A winner.
☆☆☆☆☆

THE IMMORTAL

Price **IBM PC £30.99**
Genre **Arcade Adventure**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

It's over a year now since The Immortal appeared to great public acclaim on the Amiga. A masterpiece of animation and game design, it was probably responsible for selling a fair few 1Mb upgrades. At last it's made it's way on to the PC, and now features a couple of new enhancements that make it any even better game.

The majority of the game is identical. The player guides a superbly-animated wizard on his travels around an isometric-3D dungeon. As he progresses around the corridors, he discovers treasure, traps and - of course - terrifying monsters. In the original Amiga game, the fairly complex combat took place at the same scale as the rest of the game (i.e. small) and it made judging responses to the opponents lunges and feints a touch difficult. On the PC, however, when combat occurs the view switches to a close-up that makes things far easier.

The only gripe from a PC owners point of view is that having been spoiled by the recent plethora of 256-colour games, the 16 on display here are a little disappointing. However, this doesn't seriously detract from what is an otherwise excellent game, and recommended without hesitation to anyone who fancies a bit of dungeon n' dragoning.
☆☆☆☆☆

JIMMY WHITE'S 'WHIRLWIND' SNOOKER

*Price.***Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Sport Simulation**
Publisher **Virgin Games**

Archer Maclean, veteran programmer of *IK+* and *Dropzone* is probably the last person you'd expect to write a snooker sim. Cue games have been around since the beginning of computer gaming - a few coloured shapes, some angle-of-deflection algorithms and away you go. But even with the advent of 3D graphics, none of them have really had any element of realism, until now.

The table is viewed from behind the cue ball so the player can line up shots as if on a real table. The view can be rotated through various axes and zoomed in on so the player can see from virtually every angle conceivable. The ball movement is accurate, without balls stopping for no apparent reason or going off at peculiar angles.

Two player games are the best, but four levels of computer opponent are available for the lone gamer. As the player progresses more sophisticated tactics can be incorporated, like positional play. Swerve, stun, screw and every type of spin are all possible, and are vital for snookering opponents. The end result of JWWS's comprehensive and realistic approach to recreating snooker is the most authentic sports simulation to date.
☆☆☆☆☆

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Racing Game**
Publisher **Gremlin Graphics**

A worthy successor to the excellent *Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge*, this game has a number of interesting differences to its predecessor. For a start, it's a better one-player game, but not so good for two players. Technically superior to the original, there's nevertheless something just a little bit lacking. Perhaps it's the removal of the laps system, or perhaps it's the fact that crashing into the other cars really doesn't do you that much damage. But whatever, it ain't quite as good.

However, it IS a great deal better than 80% of the driving games on the market, and there's a Link-up option allowing up to four players to race at once. The action is fast and furious and the control the players have over their cars has been greatly improved.

Players must blast their way through a selection of stages, each boasting a particular hazard, whether it be natural (snow, rain, sand) or man-made (enormous juggernauts rumbling across the road). Graphically superior to the vast majority of similar titles, Lotus just looks the business, with flashy trackside obstacles and a high level of detail on the cars themselves.

Despite being hampered by some aggravating deceleration whenever the player drives through any water and the flawed two player mode, Lotus 2 is a pretty impressive game.
☆☆☆☆

LAST NINJA 3

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Arcade Adventure**
Publisher **System 3**

Well, well, well. After everyone has been shining up their shoes at the prospect of giving System 3's much touted, much lorded and much delayed conclusion of the Ninja series a right old kicking, the bleeding thing turns out to be great!

Applying a more arcade-adventure angle to the tried and tested Ninja formula, the boys at the System have produced a game which has all the visual appeal of the first two games in the series and none of the problems. Well, that's not quite the case, but instead of the game relying so heavily on the fight routines which, to be honest, were never that good, the emphasis has been moved onto the puzzle-solving element which isn't half as hard to implement.

Spanning an epic quest across a bunch of different zones (earth, air, fire, water and void) the game continually throws up different puzzles which the player must solve in order to reach the next stage.

Aside from completing these puzzles, there's a fair amount of rucking to be done too, and the collectible weapons add enough novelty to ensure that even when the player is doing over his twelfth adversary of the level, he'll find something new to do.

Graphically, the game is really rather special, with the isometric landscapes at a stage which must surely be approaching the state of the art, and the animations of the characters themselves being undeniably fine. Just look at the speed blur on that.

☆☆☆☆

LEISURESUIT LARRY 5

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Sierra On-Line**

He's Larry Laffer! She's Passionate Patti! And they're in a whole lot of trouble! Leisure Suit Larry 5, the latest instalment in the impossibly successful adventure series chronicles the spying adventures of America's favourite lounge lizard.

In what promises to be the most sexy adventure in the series, the player must guide Larry and Patti through a world of porn and mobsters in the quest to keep good honest smut on the airwaves. Initially taking the role of the audition host of America's Sexiest Home Videos, Larry quickly becomes embroiled in a hairbrained underworld plot to get all porn off the normal market and drive it underground where enormous profits can be made.

It's all pretty standard point and click stuff, but this time the player alternates between the very different personas of Larry and Patti, allowing both to get into sexy scrapes and also avoiding and particularly severe cries of "Sexism!" from bendy liberal wets.

Again, the hand-painted 256-colour graphics and game design are an excellent splint for what occasionally lapses into a bout of pretty lame gags. However, this time Larry does have moments of absolute brilliance, and the continual promise of a further saucy pic of a top spy in a saucy pose is enough to keep you coming back for more. No? Well, please yourselves.

☆☆☆☆

MAD TV

Price **IBM PC £29.99**
Genre **Strategy.**
Publisher **Rainbow Arts**

My, what timing! Only weeks after the big TV franchise debacle and as the country quakes in dread at the threat of a load of old Spanish comedies and crappy game shows filling our screens, Rainbow Arts produce a game which is all about running your own TV station! If only the geezers at TV-AM had the chance to play Mad TV, they might still be in business.

Not only is Mad TV a right laugh, allowing the player to have total control (with the only limiting factor being the budget) over an entire TV station, but it's an excellent strategy game into the bargain.

The aim is to keep Mad TV at the top of the TV ratings while simultaneously winning the heart of Betty, the most beautiful woman in town. Taking place in a huge skyscraper, the game has the player's character haring around from the various offices, buying up films, scheduling programs and keeping an eye on the all important viewing figures.

Every now and again, your boss will crop up and give you some helpful pointers. He may be keen that his station win an award for poncey art films, so it's up to you to schedule accordingly. Now all of this would be a good enough hoot on it's own, but when you consider that Mad TV is a pretty excellent strategy game with complicated interrelations between various departments and some top notch presentation to boot, you would have to conclude that you'd be mad, ha-bleeding-ha, to miss it.

☆☆☆☆

MAGIC GARDEN

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Arcade Adventure**
Publisher **Electronic Zoo**

Good God! Whatever next. Having been plagued for months by an apparently never-ending stream of ceramic gnomes, we were understandably keen to get our hands on the game which they promote. And what a peculiar concoction it is.

In his endeavours to become 'the most efficient gnome', the player must guide a gnome around the eponymous magic garden doing, well, this is where it becomes a little bit unclear actually. He can do pretty much whatever he fancies. He can water the flowers. He can mow the lawn. He can use some magic seeds and fly around on the back of a big dragonfly! But the gnome must be careful, for there are terrible traps which live in the garden like big flowers which can hurt him or tall grass which can slow him down.

And Gnomey had better be careful with the number of objects he's carrying, or he will become too tired and get hit by lightning and die. But the gnome won't get hit by lightning if he is exploring the underground caverns where the toilet is! Gnomey can flush the toilet for extra efficiency.

Presented in side-on elevation, the game looks, plays, smells tastes and is just odd. It's as odd as anything I've ever seen in my life. Peculiar Beatrix Potter style graphics and gameplay which quite honestly is tricky to imagine appealing to the masses make Magic Garden a true enigma.

☆☆

MARTIAN MEMORANDUM

Price **IBM PC £35.99**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Access/US Gold**

Once again a game pretends to be an 'interactive movie' and turns out to be little more than a simplistic adventure with flashy graphics and sound. But in Martian Memorandum's case the aesthetics are enough to make up for the game design's shortcomings - or at least they seem to be for the first few hours. The game uses digitised video footage, sampled speech and film quality music to set the scene (the story casts you as a futuristic private detective who must travel to Mars to track down the kidnapped daughter of a famous industrialist), and it works very well, creating a strong sense of atmosphere and involvement.

But as is so often the case with games of this type, the effect of these flashy gimmicks soon wears off and when you actually buckle down to play the game you realise that there isn't really that much to see or do. An ardent adventurer could easily complete it inside of a week, because the linear game design means that it's almost impossible to go down the wrong track - it's as if you're being guided by an invisible helping hand, and that's not very satisfying. Both *Rise Of The Dragon* and *Heart Of China* offer similar and more satisfying experiences, so if you've got the PC muscle to run so demanding a product, you'd be well advised to check either of those out instead.

☆

MEGAFORTRESS

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Mindscape**

The trouble with games based on taking every single role in a big, stupid old plane like the B-52 is that virtually every role is mind-numbingly boring. I mean, who honestly wants to plot their course across thousands of miles of terrain using a 3D terrain mapping computer or have to fiddle around with ultrasound frequencies in order to jam the enemy's radar?

The aim of the game is to pilot a battle-scarred B-52 across both Iraq and the Soviet 'Union', keeping the location and aim of your mission utterly secret until the awesome tonnage of firepower can be unleashed on the target. Unfortunately, for all it's gung-ho packaging and intent, Megafortress is just a very good simulation of a rather dull business. Far more fun can be had in any of a host of more recently released flight games, and Microprose's Stealth Fighter series even offer similar creep-up-on-the-enemy antics for those players who are especially keen on that sort of thing.

Perfectly competent both graphically and on the play front, Megafortress has missions designed by real B-52 navigator and best selling author Dale Brown, although it's one of those games that I guess you really need to have experienced the real thing to appreciate.

☆☆☆

MEGA LO MANIA

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Arcade Strategy**
Publisher **Image Works**

Released amid a bunch of God-sims that are still coming thick and fast, Mirrorsoft's offering has fared better than most, steering sufficiently clear of the Big Daddy *Populous* while not being afraid to borrow little bits here and there where appropriate.

Set in an alternate universe, Mega lo Mania is all about the quest for power. Power over a set of worlds, each made up from a suite of islands, to be precise. New worlds are formed and intelligent life is placed upon them, upon which interstellar freeloaders descend and try to seize the reigns of power for themselves.

The conflict arises, needless to say, when more than one freeloader takes a shine to a particular island. Since each area can only have one ruler, a campaign of imperialism begins, with each player trying to use the forces at his disposal to overthrow the others.

Each island exists within its own time period, and the rate of development, intelligence and so on of its inhabitants is governed accordingly. Players quick to invest time in invention and the refining of natural elements, rather than simply running around hitting the others with sticks are more likely to succeed.

☆☆☆☆☆

MEGATRAVELLER 2: QUEST FOR THE ANCIENTS

Price **IBM PC £TBA**
Genre **Role-Playing Game**
Publisher **Empire**

This latest UK release from American software team Paragon is none too surprisingly a sequel to *MegaTraveller 1: The Zhodani Conspiracy*. As before, the player leads a team of five space adventurers through toil and trouble to (hopefully) riches and fame. This time around, the player task is to find a way to halt the flow of toxic slime emanating from a mysterious set of ruins left by a dead race called the Ancients. But are they dead? That is up to the player to find out...

Sporting high-quality 256-colour VGA, this is certainly a treat on the eye, and the ears as well with a suitable sound card. The game itself is an RPG in the *Ultima* style, but not half as rigorous - which for many will be more than a blessing. The story is fun and involving, with plenty of sub-tasks to perform that provide welcome and often amusing relief from the main plot. If one has a minor niggle it's that the space combat - which you'd think would be the most exciting part of the game - is flat and dull, with little sense of player involvement. In summary, highly recommended.

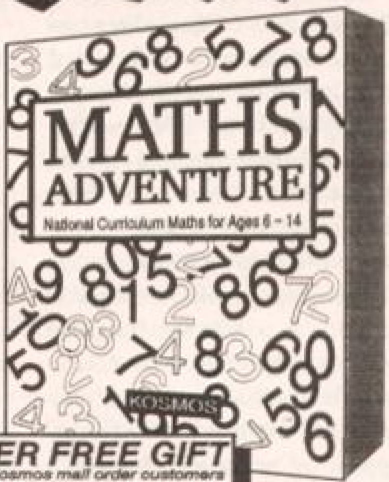
☆☆☆☆

MEGA TWINS

Price Atari **ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Platform Game**
Publisher **US Gold**

There's big trouble in the land of cutey things. A dark shadow, etc, etc, has fallen across the land, and it's up to the two sweetest and most unthreatening warriors ever to grace computer software to save the day. At its core Mega Twins is a platform game - one or two players guide their cutesy heroes through level after level of ledges and chasms, seeing off the attacking monsters with a lunge from their tiny little swords. Magic orbs can be found along the way that act as super weapons, which are particularly useful against the super-tough end-of-level nasties.

As a conversion of the CapCom coin-op Mega Twins is hardly startling, but it's competent enough. Apart from the slightly turgid pace of the action, the main thing that prevents Mega Twins from making any real impression is the lack of excitement. There are no real thrills on offer - the platform element is minor, and having to endlessly tap fire to jab the beasties into oblivion is hardly opening up whole new vistas of tele-visual entertainment. The



INCREDIBLE
NEW RELEASE

FOUR GREAT GAMES
and all this Maths revision...

Times Tables
Addition
Subtraction
Multiplication
Division
Fractions
Decimals
Using calculators
Shape & Space
Money problems
Measurements
Number patterns

MATHS ADVENTURE
National Curriculum Maths for Ages 6 - 14
KOSMOS

SUPER FREE GIFT
only for Kosmos mail order customers
CASIO SOLAR CALCULATOR

AMIGA MATHS ADVENTURE
For ages 6 - 14
Price £25.99 inc. VAT
Now available from your dealer or direct from Kosmos.

Write or telephone for a FREE 20-page brochure of our Educational and Leisure software (Please state computer type)

Kosmos Software Ltd, FREEPOST (no stamp needed)
DUNSTABLE, Beds. LU5 6BR
Telephone 05255 3942 or 5406
KOSMOS SOFTWARE

ORIGINAL SOFTWARE + CARTRIDGE EXCHANGE
THE CLUB FOR 16 BIT + GAMES MACHINE OWNERS.
FREE MEMBERSHIP
* WIN A SEGA GAME GEAR HAND HELD !*
WANT TO EXCHANGE YOUR GAMES? WELL NOW YOU CAN! SEND US YOUR GAME + £2.00 FOR ONE OR £1.50 EACH FOR TWO OR MORE. WE WILL SEND YOU OUR LIST OF GAMES FOR EXCHANGE FOR YOU TO
CHOOSE FROM. EVERY
EXCHANGE MADE WILL ENTER YOU INTO OUR FREE PRIZE DRAW FOR
A SEGA HAND HELD! FREE NEWSLETTER +
OTHER OFFERS FOR MEMBERS ONLY SEND
CHEQUES + P.O. TO
O.S. + C.E.
11 WHITSTABLE CLOSE
HOWDALE PARK
HULL HU8 9XR.

PLUS! TENSTAR GAMES PACK
ATARI
520ST
MEGA DRIVE
SEGA
FUN
GAMES

WIN
SEGA MEGA DRIVE
Just call ...
0898 313 565
Answer 4 Simple computer games questions correctly and you could win a Megadrive.

WIN
ATARI 520 ST
0898 313 564
You have Ten Shots to ZAP the monster and win.

Winners are chosen at random from the correct entries received. If you are under 18 years of age please obtain permission of whoever pays the phone bill. Infodial Po Box 36, LS1 4TN. Calls charged 36p cheap rate 48p per minute at all other times.

final nail in the coffin is the fact that the whole thing is incredibly easy - a competent player will probably get halfway through the game on his first set of credits. Mega Twins had A-grade potential, but whether it's the fault of the original coin-op or the conversion it's actually turned out to be Meagre rather than Mega.

☆☆☆

MERCS

Price **Megadrive £39.99 (Import)**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Sega**

As if Megadrive owners hadn't had quite enough shoot-it-out blasts to keep them happy well into the next century, here's another chance to hammer the joypad. The player must team up with a bullet-headed mate and raid increasingly well defended enemy installations in your mission to rescue the President. Even the smooth top-down multi-directional scrolling and plentiful power-ups fail to elevate Mercs above the rank and file of shoot-'em-ups. Solo play is available for soldiers of fortune who prefer to go-it-alone (or who haven't got any friends) but the thrill factor of such missions is really pretty limited.

Equipped with initially weedy weapons, the over-muscled heroes must gradually work their way up the screen, picking off rebel soldiers both on foot or lurking in gun towers or jeeps. Extra firepower and strength replenishers can be had by destroying the numerous crates lying about.

Players can speed their progress through the frequently tiresome levels by jumping into a semi-burned out jeep and roaring up the screen. This bit is quite amusing, as you can run down the enemy soldiers or blast them with the jeep's in-built bazooka.

As well as the requisite end-of-level guardians (which here take the form of an assortment of military hardware - planes, helicopters, tanks, etc) the levels are reasonably well broken up with bigger foes in the shape of guntowers, machine gun nests and the like.

Aside from the problems thrown up when a game controlled by the joypad necessitates diagonal firing (the enemy troops always seem to attack on a diagonal) Mercs has a brace of other inadequacies up its sleeve. It looks poor, offers absolutely no originality and when played solo is a crushing bore.

☆☆

MiG29M SUPER FULCRUM

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Domark**

Improving on an already successful formula, Domark have done away with many of the longevity problems of their first MiG game and have set this game against an epic backdrop of conflict in southern America. Taking the role of the pilot of a United Nations controlled MiG, the player must launch himself into hostile airspace from a solitary allied-controlled airbase - his mission is to gradually erode the stinking rebel infidels' grasp on the area by blowing up their supply lines and destroying their fuel depots.

It's bizarre that the company most recently associated with not especially excellent coin-op conversions should turn out such a classy simulation, and as a result, it may be tough for them to find the right audience. Nevertheless, a classy product it is, with a bunch of external views and a flexibility of mission structure enabling the inventive player to try his hand at planning his own strategies for doing away with the enemy threat.

Also included in this game is an implementation of the real MiG's fly-by-wire system, an auto-stabilising device which prevents the plane from flicking around all over the place like a big girl's blouse. Most handy in combat.

Presented, surprisingly enough, in polygon graphics, MiG beats the competition on the ease-of-use front, even if it is a bit tricky to imagine it outlasting some of the more intense Microprose products. A winner.

☆☆☆☆

MIGHT AND MAGIC III: ISLES OF TERRA

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Role-Playing Game**
Publisher **New World Computing/US Gold**

"By my mighty sword of Zorak, I, Hagor Dragonbone, must smite the evil doom-legions of Krynn before the alignment of the six moon-worlds!" Yes, well, you get the general idea. Might And Magic III is yet another delve into the much-explored realms of FRP gaming, this time coming over as a cross between *Dungeon Master* and *The Bard's Tale*. Is it just me or has the whole FRP genre been done to death so badly that there's just nothing new anymore?

This third Might And Magic outing would seem to support that argument, as apart from some very flashy VGA visuals and soundboard sonics, there seems to be very little new or interesting on offer, except maybe for that ever-persistent fraternity of die-hard RPG fanatics. As you'd suspect, the scenario is about as hackneyed as one is ever going to get, with some claptrap about returning the Ultimate Power Orbs (mmm, yes!) to the King. What that involves is selecting a party of dwarves, orcs, heroes, warriors and all that, and then wandering about fighting with dragons, collecting treasure and picking up clues.

The game itself actually is very pretty, but for the most part the adventuring is pretty slow and insubstantial. Considering, however, how conditioned FRP gamers have become, I doubt that anybody who's likely to buy it will be disappointed by what they find.

☆☆☆

MONSTER BUSINESS

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Eclipse**

The mad meanies from the big forest have once again broken loose, and are searching for little items they can steal completely spoiling Mr Bob's construction site. Become Leroy, the best beast buster around and blow all these nasty little monsters sky high! A goal in life if ever there was one. Monster business, the epitome of the average arcade game features stupid graphics and a doubly stupid premise - to retrieve all the objects from the building site, Leroy must blow up all the monsters with some sort of fatal bicycle pump, causing them to inflate and eventually rise to the top of the screen, dropping all their objects as they go.

Despite the idiocy of the whole affair, Monster Business is actually quite good. Different screens each present a different sort of hazard, whether it be sliding platforms or a speedy time limit, and the player is so interested in trying to get the the end of the level that he probably won't realise quite how crass and daft the game is.

Smart graphics and it-could-only-be-German music help Monster Business rise about the pack and shine out as an example of what arcade games should be about. It's like an Abba record, if you know what I mean.

☆☆☆☆

NEBULUS 2

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **21st Century Entertainment**

Rising from the Hewson ashes like a phoenix looking exceptionally like whatever it was before it was burnt, 21st Century Entertainment aren't having much luck at the moment. Not only are they having some considerable difficulty with their Megadrive product, but the one game that looked like it could actually make them some money has turned out to be somewhat of a disappointment.

The European coders responsible for sequelling John Phillips' original classic have done a bit of a botch job, ruining the gameplay that made the first game so excellent by piling on lots of inane and useless power-up type features. The classic formula has been totally swamped by the sheer weight of these new 'ideas', and as such anybody who enjoyed the first game is likely to be very disappointed by this. However, it is quite pretty and, at least for those who haven't seen the first game, not a total washout on the playability front. But while the first game knew exactly where the addiction/frustration threshold was, Nebulus 2 steps over it like it wasn't even there. Not recommended.

☆☆

OUTRUN

Price **Game Gear £24.99**
Genre **Racing Game**
Publisher **Sega**

It may be an oldy but it certainly isn't a goldy - at least, not in its Gear incarnation it isn't. Out Run is arcade racing action stripped down to its basics - the player has to drive a red Ferrari through four stages, avoiding other traffic and those pesky stationary roadside obstacles. It's all against the clock, with the player being awarded precious extra seconds every time he completes one of the stages. And... er... that's just about it.

The impression of speed (achieved using good ol' colour banding) is fine, although the objects grow in an annoyingly coarse and chunky fashion. Unfortunately the number of roadsign objects is small, and the number of cars on the road even smaller - even on the hardest stage I only counted two other vehicles on the road at tops. Very poor. Worst of all it's ridiculously easy - I completed the game on my third go. Yes, really! The only real mark in the game's favour is the ability to play head-to-head with another Gear owner, but even then the thrills are few and far between. Not good.

☆☆

OUTRUN EUROPA

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Racing Game**
Publisher **US Gold**

At long last! A game that has become a legend, along with the likes of *Star Trek* and *Birds of Prey*, over the last couple of years, simply because it's taken so bloody long to come out. The original idea was to release the product to cash in on the wave of euphoria from the original *OutRun* conversion - which should give you an idea of how long we've been waiting for it. We ended up getting the offiical sequel, *Turbo OutRun* first, which wasn't much cop, and now we've got this, which isn't either.

The basic idea is that the player has to take charge of a variety of vehicles - car, bike and boat - as he races over various land-and-sea stages to deliver a vital package, while international agents are out to stop you. It's all a bit ludicrous really, and what's seemingly supposed to be a cross between *OutRun* and *Chase H.Q.* with extra knobs on is in fact a bit of a shoddy mess. The road sections aren't much fun to play because control of the vehicles is so bloody over-sensitive, and the enemy cars just keep on getting in the way in a way that isn't conducive to gameplay at all, but is just very frustrating. The boat bits don't even bear think about because they're so unjust and difficult, and 99% of players will probably put their foot through the monitor screen within five minutes of loading it up. Talking of loading, the constant disk accessing is a pain in the prostate, and it all hardly seems worth it when it's not even very clear what's actually going on in the game. There are far better race games available, so don't waste your precious time pondering over this one.

☆

PEGASUS

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Gremlin Graphics**

Oh deary deary dear. What a shame that just when Gremlin starts getting a good reputation for itself with its classy product of late, it turns out a piece of tripe like this. Based very loosely on the classic Greek myth, Pegasus is a weird half-and-half mix of *R-Type* style shoot-'em-up action and run-along-and-chop-up-the-baddies platform stuff. This mixture of airborne and ground-based action is supposed to give the player variety and keep him interest. In practice all it does it get very boring very quickly.

In the shoot-'em-up section, Perseus (or Percius, as the box incorrectly spells his name) flies along on the back of the mythical winged horse, which is animated in an atrociously unconvincing manner, and blasts away at the attacking gargoyles, demons, harpies, etc. When he's survived this onslaught, Pegasus lands, Perseus dismounts and the ground section begins. This happens 50 times (25 air sections, 25 on the ground), by which time the player has probably torn all his hair out, kicked in the TV screen and lobbed his computer out of the window.

It's not that Pegasus is a bad idea - it's just that it's been executed in a such a God-awful lazy and unimaginative manner. The action in the horsey bits is sluggish and annoying, while the ground levels lack any of the finesse of, say, *Switchblade II*. The fact that there's lots of it doesn't make it any more of a viable purchase - unless you're a masochist of course. Complete with all manner of intolerable spelling mistakes within the game ("existance" instead of "existence", "new" instead of "knew"), Pegasus would have only just made the grade two years ago, or on public domain today. To ask £26 quid for it when it falls so horribly below today's standards of graphics and gameplay is a bit on an insult. Avoid.

☆☆

PITFIGHTER

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Beat-'Em-Up**
Publisher **Domark**

If ever there's a prime example example of an excellent conversion of an average coin-op then Pitfighter is it. If you're an arcade goer then you're probably more than familiar with the game. With its giant monitor screen, three sets of player controls and stand-out digitised graphics you could hardly miss it. Trouble was, underneath the unique flashy visuals and meaty sound lurked a distinctly dull beat-'em-up, made even worse by the confusion caused by the grainy-looking graphics. Where's my bloke gone? Is he hitting me or not? You know the sort of thing. All in all, a less than rewarding experience.

In converting Pitfighter for the home systems, Teque London have actually improved it a Hell of a lot. Indeed, if you liked the coin-op, chances are you'll like the home game even more. The graphics, which have retained pretty much all of the flash special FX of the coin-op, are clearer, and the slower pace makes the game much easier to play. The joystick controls are a little uninstinctive, but it only takes a few goes to get the swing of things. But as good a conversion as it is, it still can't compensate for the fact that fundamentally Pitfighter's about as exciting as tapping a fire button all day. Which, er, in Pitfighter is pretty much what you spend all your time doing.

☆☆☆

POPULOUS II

Price **Amiga £29.99**
Genre **Action Strategy**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

Awesome! One of the greatest games of all time just got considerably better. Bullfrog's long-awaited sequel is just so excellent that it's difficult to find the words to describe it. Basically, it's prety much the same game - guide your followers through a series of apocalyptic battles, God versus God, over countless isometric worlds.

From that point on, however, it's a whole new ball game. Whereas the original game had only a hadful of godly effects, Populous II has scores of them, many much more deadly than anything encountered in the firs t game. The plethora of extra features (road and city building, effects that interact with each other, experience points that build up as you progress) make Populous II a far more involved and rewarding experience than the original. Absolutely phenomenal stuff, Populous II is a game that you really REALLY cannot afford to miss. Buy it immediately.

☆☆☆☆☆

RAILROAD TYCOON

Price **Amiga £35.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **MicroProse**

The ACE Benchmark game makes it's way onto the Amiga, and what a fine conversion it is! Building a railroad empire across the USA at the turn of the 20th Century may sound like hard work, but for those who like their strategy to run deep, Sid Meier's simulation of that very pursuit is fun Fun FUN! We know its difficult to imagine how, but trust us, it is. The feeling of power is paramount as you lay your track from sea to shining sea, conduct big-time business and generally earn loads of cash.

Beginning life as an entrepreneur in the early 1800s, you must turn a small stake into the biggest stake in railroad industry history ever! By taking control of every element in the decision making process which makes the railroad work, the player must handle tiny details as well as broader political and economic issues, all at the same time as competing either with a friend or against rival tycoons from history. And every element of the game is represented with top-quality graphics to make even the most number-crunchingly intense sections of the title easy to manage. Meier's excellent user interface and the sheer precision of the game design and balance compared with the top-notch power of the Amiga make this version of the game an outright winner. Highly recommended to all and sundry.

☆☆☆☆☆

RISE OF THE DRAGON

Price **Amiga £34.99**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Dynamix/Sierra On-Line**

Amiga owners have been scrambling to become the first to purchase this- the first or a new wave of Sierra games helmed by the perennially popular Dynamix team. But they should be warned. While Amiga owners get to enjoy just as many visual thrills and plot twists as their PC Pals, they pay the price of swapping ten (count every last one as it slips in and out of your drive for the umpteenth time) disks.

However, if you're willing to pay the access-time price, Rise is an extremely rewarding product. The player takes the role of a futuristic detective, a real Marlowe type, slugging his way through a drug addled city of sleaze, the last remaining obstacle between the mysterious Dragon and total control of the entire planet! Played in first-person perspective, the game uses the no-typing-necessary control interface which Sierra have made their trademark.

This is another example of the interactive movie deal which American companies are so fond of forcing down our throats, but for once it isn't too bad. There is actually a story here! And there is actually some adventuring to do. The player must investigate the strange drug-related death of the Mayor's daughter, interrogate scummy criminals and do all the other stuff that private investigators have to do. Wire taps, opening other people's mail, hanging out in low-rent strip joints. What a life.

And it's all in those lovely hand drawn graphics. Mind you... all those disks...
☆☆☆☆

ROBIN HOOD

Price **IBM PC £30.99**
Genre **Arcade Strategy**
Publisher **Millennium**

Mercilessly coat-tailing the publicity of the recent batch of Lincoln green movies, Millennium's completely unlicensed version of the tale is surprisingly entertaining.

Presented in *Populous* style, the game sticks to the classic storyline of Robin of Locksley being booted out of his lands by the evil Sherrif of Nottingham, deserted by his people and left to fend for himself.

The player, taking the title role of course, must assemble a band of merry men and set about doing away with the nasty old sheriff once and for all. An equally important goal for the player is to convince all the peasants and other inhabitants of the forest and its environs that Rob isn't the murdering thieving blaggard that the Sherrif has described to them but is a lovely kind hearted soul.

Aside from combat and object-seeking, there's a refreshing amount of genuinely funny dialogue in the game too, with the characters camping up their roles to the best of their ability.

It's an extremely enjoyable and innovative arcade adventure cum strategy cum role playing game who's worst failing could be that the plot is so familiar the player is compelled to play through to the very end as soon as he physically can, thus diminishing the appeal of return visits.
☆☆☆☆

ROBOCOD

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Millennium**

And about time too. Computer owners have been waiting a long time for a platform game good enough to wave in the faces of the smug console owners, revoltingly proud of their *Sonics* and their *Marios*. And here it is.

Robocod wins few awards for its originality. There are elements of just about every running n' jumping game from *Manic Miner* onwards in there somewhere, but thanks to careful design and wise mixing and matching of game styles the end result is far more than the sum of its parts.

As in *Mario IV*, the core game task is simple - get from one end of the level to the other, and jump on the heads of any bad guys to wander past. Of course, in practice there's a bit more to it than that. Some of the 70+ levels see Robocod travelling through the levels in a bouncing car, a spluttering prop plane and even an old enamelled bath! There are even some areas where 'Cod swims around - much like he did in the game's prequel *James Pond*.

In fact, it's the sheer variety of the game - along with the superbly smooth control over the fishy main character

TO PLAY TODAY'S GAMES YOU NEED TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY.

WE SUPPLY THAT TECHNOLOGY.

Visit our centre, write or phone for more details. Finance details on request. We can deliver nationwide

Cornwall and Devon
COMPUTER SYSTEMS

All prices exclude VAT and Delivery

Cornwall & Devon
Computers.
Hexworthy, Barton,
Launceston, Cornwall
PL15 9NL.

Tel: 0566 772610
Fax: 0566 772685

A range of machines to play today's leisure games as they were designed to be played

Elite Games System -286 16Mhz 2Mb System RAM	£1049
Superior 25 Games System - 386sx 25Mhz 2Mb System RAM	£1159
Ultimate 33 Games System.- 286 DX 33Mhz 64Kb Cache 4Mb RAM	£1399
Ultimate 40 Games System - 286 dx 40Mhz 64Kb Cache 4Mb RAM	£1449
The Machine 486 - 33Mhz 128Kb Cache 8Mb System RAM	£1799

Both 3.5" High Density Floppy Drives
43Mb Hard Drive
1Mb Video Graphics Card
SVGA 14" Colour Monitor
supports up to and including
1024 768 Resolution
Soundblaster Version 2 Sound card
Two 1-306 Twin Speaker System with built in Amplifier
Mouse Joystick (Quickshot Warrior 5)
Mini Tower Case or Desktop
Choose £100 of the latest software
MS DOS 5

3 Year Warranty

100'S OF GAMES AVAILABLE.
PHONE FOR PRICE, WE BEAT THE REST!!!!

All systems are installed with the games of your choice, before despatch

- that makes it such a joy to play. Every level features something new, either in graphics or gameplay, and there's little chance of boredom setting in. The wonderfully cute sprites, bright and cheerful backdrops and sing-alongable tunes are excellent too. All in all, Robocod is a polished, playable and - thank God - *fun* slice of platform pie that you'd have to be criminally insane to let slip by.

☆☆☆☆☆

ROBOCOP 3

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Ocean**

Robocop? In 3D? Nah, it'd never work - would it? Well, the good news is that it does! Indeed, Digital Image Design's unique slant on the *Robocop 3* movie licence arguably make it the best tie-in yet.

In essence, Robocop 3 isn't *that* different from almost every other film tie-in. It's an amalgam of several game sequences - a bit of shoot-'em-up, a bit of driving, a bit of beat-'em-up - where the simplistic gameplay is compensated for by the sheer variety on offer. However, in this case there's another factor - DID's ground-breaking solid 3D.

Rather than watching some sprites leaping about a 2D backdrop, the player views the world through Robo's eyes as he patrols the streets of Old Detroit on foot, in a police car and even in the air thanks to his new Gyropack. The atmosphere generated, especially in the foot patrol sequences, is quite unbelievable. The only weak links in an otherwise incredibly-strong chain are a couple of feeble hand-to-hand combat sequences with a robotic Ninja assassion - the combat moves are limited and the action sluggish.

However, those sequences apart, there are frequent occasions during the game that the player actually does feel as if he is taking part in a film. And at the end of the day, isn't that what you should be buying a film tie-in for?

☆☆☆☆

ROBOZONE

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Image Works**

Trying to hop onto the Green bandwagon (and missing by about six months), Imagework's latest and certainly not greatest puts the player in the driving seat of a giant two-legged war machine, a sort of cut-price version of the one in Psygnosis' *Killing Game Show*, with a mission to put an end to pollution. Hoorah!.

Fundamentally Robozone's a simple blast-anything-that-moves affair, with the programmers trying to maintain player interest by constantly changing the play style. One level's a side-viewed multidirectional-scrolling explore-n'-shoot, the second's much the same but in 3D and the third's a horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up. While each is programmed well enough, there's precious little fun or excitement to be found in any of them.

The really annoying thing about Robozone is it's pretense to being 'Green' - the manual is littered with Top Tips about how to help save the environment. One states pompously: "If you have a choice, avoid buying packaged goods." Considering that Robozone comes in a giant box with a single disc and a thin manual rattling about inside, the irony of this statement beggars belief. Probably the best tip is the first one: "Try not to waste energy." Imageworks, having played this I already have.

☆☆

RODLAND

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Storm**

Stomach-emptyingly cute it may be, but there's no denying that Rodland is a fine game. The Jaleco coin-op wasn't particularly noteworthy, finding itself adrift in a sea of graphically excellent games upon its release. Now, however, the conversion seems to have cropped up when the highest-profile cute game over the moment (*Magic Pockets*) has failed to meet expectations.

The player must work his way through a massive suite of screens, collecting points n' power ups and killing monsters with his rod (hence the name) by bashing them into the floor.

The end of each level is marked by the arrival of an enormous end of level bad guy such as an elephant, who, despite looking about as threatening as a big lump of cotton wool in a knitted bag will do for the players forthwith. Interestingly enough, the player can opt to play a girl if he/she wants, not that it makes much difference to the playing style. And to be honest, the 'boy' looks so bleeding effeminate you'd never know anyway.

Chock-a-block full of excellent visuals, Rodland is a fine conversion and it could even be argued to better its coin-op parent, as control over the characters has been improved. Certainly not a title for gamers into depth or gung-ho blasting, but a nonetheless worthwhile purchase for anyone else.

☆☆☆☆

RUGBY - THE WORLD CUP

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Sports Arcade**
Publisher **Domark**

Hey! It's *Scrum Off*! Well, not quite, but it is a pretty blatant attempt by the Doms to adapt Anco's footy classic style to the rough n' tumble, if you will, 'world' of rugby. Of course, as any fule kno, rugby and football are very different sports, with the former lacking the non-stop speed of the latter. Not, then, perhaps the best game to try to shrink to fit into *Kick Off*'s hard and fast playing style.

However, as it 'appens, it all works pretty well. Sure, the action is a bit stop and start, but there is a definite flow to the game and few lapses in pace. The game is viewed in plan view, with the pitch scrolling to follow the player's... er... player (who is, natch, the one nearest the ball). Throws and kicks are controlled simply by the joystick, and it lacks the subtlety of *Kick Off* (no aftertouch here). Scrums are a case of frantically waggling the joystick to force the opposition back, and this is fine - unless you're playing the All Blacks, in which case you need to waggle a sub-light speeds to beat them.

In fact, that's probably the biggest criticism - the top teams are too tough. There are other minor niggles, such as the way player sprites overlap on top of each other and the way that the other members of the team don't put themselves in good positions to pass, meaning that play often revolves one-man rushes from mid-way down the pitch to the try line. But while Rugby may not be perfect, it's still a pretty good 'try'. (Cue sound of reviewer being shot.)

☆☆☆☆

SARAKON

Price **Atari ST/Amiga/IBM PC £19.99**
Genre **Puzzle**
Publisher **Virgin Games**

Games which call the player stupid are unlikely to go down in history as great entertainers, yet Sarakon, despite making this fatal mistake is a perfectly decent rip-off of the *Mah Jong* tile-swapping business. Basically, if you imagine *Snap* played with some old oriental tablets and with some complicated 'can't do that' rules, then you're pretty close to imagining what Sarakon is all about.

The aim of the game is to click on similar tablets which sit in a particular orientation, eventually ending up with no tablets left, or at least as few as possible before the time limit runs out. Once done, the player is rewarded with a breakdown of his score and a comment from the computer as to his Sarakon ability.

The problem with these puzzle games, however, is that they all look similar enough to make the player want to pick them up and have a go, yet they insist on containing enough rule subtleties to make doing just that impossible. The result? The *Mah Jong* player will feel infuriated that he can't make his normal moves work.

The presentation is first class, apart from the cheesy sound effects and music which don't so much create the ambiance of the Far East as a grubby take-away in Dulwich.

If comparatively sedate mouse-clicking is your bag, and your eyes can stand staring at the monitor for ages while you scratch your head, Sarakon is the game for you.

☆☆☆

SECRET WEAPONS OF THE LUFTWAFFE

Price **IBM PC £40.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Lucasfilms/US Gold**

Deep, deep, deep. Secret Weapons of

the Luftwaffe is a big old game and no mistake. It's also the sequel the critically acclaimed *Their Finest Hour*. The title comes packed with new goodies but brings the same problem of the first game; i.e. the flicky and rather horrible bitmap graphics.

The player is offered the chance to pilot aircraft in a seemingly limitless number of historical missions, shadowing or guarding planes and taking place in actual battles and scenarios of the Second World War.

However, played in a *Wing Commander* style with bitmaps taking the place of the polygons so frequently and successfully used in other flight sims, Luftwaffe will have all but the owners of the fastest machines hammering down the detail level in the attempt to get it to run at an acceptable rate. Ambitious players can then define their own missions to determine what history would have turned out like if there was just one less Messerschmitt BF109G in a particular combat situation. Luftwaffe is exactly the sort of game - as distinct from *Wing Commander* - that you actually want to make excuses for. And that's simply down to the fact that under the try-too-hard graphics which actually look pretty absurd every now and again, there is a quite brilliant game.

☆☆☆☆☆

SEVEN COLORS

Price **Atari ST/Amiga/IBM PC £25.99**
Genre **Puzzle**
Publisher **Infogrames**

Tetris, the game that started it all, may be getting on a bit now, but there's always room for a new puzzle game on the market. The only problem is that the vast majority of puzzlers that have been washing up on these shores from America and Europe have either been of unbearably low quality, or just too weird to get the head round.

Seven Colors from Infogrames, a company that prides itself on its off-the-wallness, fits snugly into the latter category. It's played over a large board made up of hundreds of tiny coloured diamonds where the objective is to change as many diamonds to your colour, spreading them like a virus across the screen, faster than your opponent does. The first player to fill 50% of the screen area is the winner. It's difficult enough to understand when you're actually playing the game, so don't worry if you're a little foggy after that brief explanation.

In fact the major problem with the game is that it's not very easy to understand, and because things just seem to happen it's not very easy to keep track, or indeed to work out what's going on at all. The confusing situation is further compounded because the instructions hardly explain anything at all. Persistent players may well get something out of it however, and there's a variety of game options to spice up the action if they do. Oh, and there's some very nice in-game classical music which suits the nature of the game perfectly and is very soothing indeed.

☆☆

SILENT SERVICE II

Price **Amiga £35.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Microprose**

It may have taken five years, but the sequel to one of the most critically acclaimed and publicly admired sim games is finally with us. Silent Service II features all the best bits from the first game as well as a host of original and new doo-dads.

Digitised graphics and sampled sounds simply confirm the Service as a game which is undoubtedly one of the most detailed, accurate and realistic on the market, but new gamers should be warned that, just like life on a real submarine, it's not all walking, er, action.

No. There's a lot of the old *Above Us The Waves* stuff with turning off engines to sneak up on enemy warships without alerting their radar. And as for all that tank blowing stuff. I ask you!

Microprose are indubitably the outright kings of all things sim., but their policy of increasing the action and minimising the dial-watching as used to such good effect in *F-15 Strike Eagle II* would be well extended to this particular title.

For gamers wishing to purchase an accurate sub simulation, rest assured, there is absolutely none better. But those expecting to get their torpedoes off straight away would be better to wait for a more accessible equivalent.

☆☆☆☆☆

HOW TO PLACE YOUR ENTRY

All you have to do is send off the form below, together with your payment.
Entries to the Pink Pages cost just £6.00 each. (Except for helpline which is free).

- The maximum is 20 words except for helpline. (Helpline entries can be extended to 100 words max - use another sheet of paper if necessary).
- The service is NOT open to trade advertisers
- We will print your advertisment in the available issue
- Entries which could be interpreted as encouraging software piracy will not be accepted

ENTRY FORM

Write your advertisement here, one word per box. Include your name, address and phone number if you want them printed

POST TO :
ACE READERS PAGE
Emap Images, Priory Court,
30-32 Farringdon Lane,
London EC1R 3AU

CATEGORY OF ENTRY :

☐ Helpline
☐ Wanted
☐ Other
☐ For Sale
☐ User Groups

Please place my ad in the next available issue of ACE.
Name :..........
Address:..........
....
....

Method of payment

☐ Cheque ☐ P.O

Please make cheques and postal orders payable to ACE Magazine

SOLITAIRE POKER

Price **Game Gear £29.99 (Import)**
Genre **Puzzle**
Publisher **Sega**

Everyone loves a good puzzle game, and this is a very good one. The aim is simple - select a card from one of the four piles on offer, and place it on a 5 x 5 grid. Points are awarded for pairs, flushes, etc, created either vertically, horizontally or along the main diagonals. Score over a certain amount and the player progesses on to the next, tougher level. There are a number of variants on the theme, but that's the main thrust of the game.

What more is there to say about such a simple concept? Aesthetically it's fine - the functional graphics are clear and colourful and there's a vast number of background tunettes to pick between. Although not exactly using the full-colour LCD capabilities of the Gear to it's fullest, it's one of the most enjoyable Gear games I've seen for a long, long time, and as such comes with a strong recommendation.

☆☆☆☆☆

SMASH TV

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Ocean**

"Good luck - you're gonna need it" screams the show's oily compere, and never have there been truer words said. This conversion of the incredibly violent Williams coin-op has translated surprisingly well to the home systems, with nearly all the blood and thunder elements so beloved of the original ported across faithfully.

The game takes the form of a futuristic game show, where one or two contestants armed with a rapid-fire gun slug it out with a seemingly endless parade of thugs, freaks and goons to win big money and prizes in a single-screen arena. Power-ups and end-of-zone bad guys add to the already phenomenal carnage.

On a purely visceral level, it's immensely satisfying as the plugged opponents explode into red gobbets of flesh. Indeed, the sprites are small enough to be almost anybody you want them to be, so you can imagine that you're shooting up endless clones of your boss if you want to. Very therapeutic.

As a single-player game it's fine, though there's a serious risk that boredom may well set in worryingly early. The two-player game, on the other hand, is something else. There's not been player-to-player shouting like this since *Kick Off* 2.

The coin-op's two joysticks (one to move, one to direct fire) have translated adequately to a single controller, though if you have two there is an option to use both which makes the game far better.

A superb conversion, and more than deserving of your hard-earned pennies. Go to it, you psycho you!

☆☆☆☆

THUNDERHAWK

Price **Amiga £30.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Core Design**

Most flight sims require a good deal of practice before any reward can be garnered from them. All those keyboard controls and miscellaneous aircraft functions do quite a lot to put off anyone looking for a quick blast. Core Design have seen this gap in the market and more than adequately filled it with Thunderhawk. All control is via the mouse, which makes everything, from weapon selection to helicopter control, quick and easy. It's a welcome change from the usual memory test of clicks and non-clicks.

The game itself is broken down into a series of campaigns, each preceded by a graphic briefing sequence indicating target and terrain type. Before taking to the sky the player must select the appropriate armament for the Thunderhawk, although there's a default if this seems to much of a chore.

What makes the game a treat is the handling of the helicopter. The controls make flying intuitive, letting the player get on with the mission rather than battling to stay airborne. Graphics are smooth and move at a fair click, though there isn't much background scenery. If you've never been tempted to try a flight sim, then this is the game to change your attitude.

☆☆☆☆☆

STRIKE FLEET

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

Strike Fleet doesn't look the most inspiring game from the shots on the back of the box, but the Lucasfilm credit hints that this may be better than it appears. As, in fact, it is. The game is a sea-based strategy game split into fourteen individual missions or a more-taxing eight-mission campaign. After each mission briefing, the player is allocated a number of points (depending on the difficulty of the mission) to 'spend' in the shipyard. Each ship 'costs' a certain number of points depending on its class, so the player must be careful in picking a balanced fleet.

Once at sea, the player can flick between the ships at will. Control is relatively simplistic (thankfully), allowing the player to steer, change speed, activate radar and sonar and, of course, fire the variety of on-board weapons. In addition, certain ships carry a complement of helicopter that can be sent on recces or sub-hunting forays.

Despite it's initially drab appearance, Strike Fleet actually turns out to be quite involving. There's a great deal of satisfaction to be had from successfully controlling the fleet, and seeing off the air, sea or underwater attacks provides frequent doses of adrenalin. Admittedly, those without a strategic leaning are unlikely to be converted by the game's charms, but if Strike Fleet sounds at least slightly appealing give it a go. I think you'll be surprised.

☆☆☆☆

UNDER PRESSURE

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Electronic Zoo**

Oops. Funny how one minute you're on top of the world and the next you're, erm, not. A situation which top notch programmers Eldritch the Cat have found themselves in with their latest release, Under Pressure. Their last and indeed only release, *Projectyle* was exceedingly well received, being a pretty excellent sports sim, but Heaven only knows what gremlins and glitches are to blame for this disaster.

Styled in an uncomfortably similar fashion to Psygnosis games (the in-between level text is virtually identical to Psygy's game name text and the robot which the player controls looks exceedingly like the creature on the *Shadow of the Beast* box), Under Pressure falls down in almost every single respect.

Guiding a huge robotic killing machine through a bunch of decaying cityscapes, the player must duel with a myriad of different monsters - mainly snakes - with the impressive arsenal of weaponry available from his cockpit.

Sounds alright, doesn't it? Alas, from here on in, the game falls down rather badly. For a start, everything is far too big. The player's robot almost fills the screen, but doesn't have the detail or animation finesse to support its size. Also, the scale presents a problem in that since only one horizontal level of the city is ever visible on the screen, the game feels more like a duck shoot than an exciting adventure. Absolutely no aiming is necessary for shooting for the monsters either, as they just sit up and swallow the player's fire. Oh dear.

☆

UTOPIA

Price **Amiga £29.99**
Genre **Arcade Strategy**
Publisher **Gremlin**

The quality of life on earth, let's face it, sucks. And the world is screwed up so bad that nothing anyone can do can save it. We need to start again.

This is the premise of Utopia, another *Populous/Powermonger* style affair. Except this time the aim, rather than simply ruling a world or conquering it is to construct and run it and to make all its inhabitants feel really good! The aim is to elevate the quality of life to 100% - Utopia.

It's not difficult to grasp the aims and controls of the game. And it quickly becomes apparent that there are lots of problems thrown up by the idea of making everyone happy. For a start, if you spend all the money on hospitals, food production and month-long sports festivals, your populace will be content, but without any credible defence when the inevitable computer-controlled alien attack occurs.

Beginning from just a few key buildings, it's up to the player to construct the colony using icon-driven actions while inspecting the world in isometric 3D. There are almost no rules in this society. You can run things virtually any way you want.

The only factor that is missing is the option to try and run things as a dictatorship regime and make a certain part of the population very happy while keeping the workers ground down into the dirt. Still, that never works, does it?

☆☆☆☆☆

VOLFIED

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Empire**

Qix is back in town, and better than ever! No matter how widely tastes may differ among the gamesplaying fraternity, you'd be hard pushed to find anybody who doesn't enjoy a game of good old *Qix*. Its appeal is universal because it's so simple and addictive, and like *Breakout*, its gameplay has stood the test of time. What Volfied (converted from Taito's coin-op) represents is a 90s version of the original classic - it is to *Qix* what *Arkanoid* was to *Breakout*, keeping the original framework intact, but adding lots of pretty backdrops, power-ups and extra features.

For the most part it's much the same - draw boxes around the screen to fill up 75% or more of the screen area without the fusewire which makes up the line itself getting hit by any of the marauding enemies - which, instead of the old gyrating line, now takes the form of a giant mothership that roams about spitting about bullets, and a couple of pesky little helpers. Lasers and speedups are among the collectables, while high-tech backgrounds and SFX provide the aesthetic overhaul.

Since *Qix*-style games are so thin on the ground, Volfied, with its classy execution and uncluttered gameplay is a welcome addition to the software scene - and if you've got any sense and admiration for the classics, you'll add it your collection too.

☆☆☆☆

VROOM

Price **Atari ST £24.99**
Genre **Racing Game**
Publisher **Lankhor**

Without wanting to be nasty to our European counterparts, what with 1992 and all that, it has to be said that most of the software that crosses over from the continent is a bit smelly. Vroom, however, from French publisher Lankhor, has proven itself to be the exception to the rule. Although it's not a patch on the likes of *Indianapolis 500* or *Formula One Grand Prix*, Vroom is nevertheless a jelly supper racing game, boasting very impressive speed as the player vrooms his way (hence the name) around a first-person environment.

It's got all the usual fixtures and fittings - rear-view mirrors, pit-stops, overhead maps,bridges, dips and hills on the track, training modes, qualifying laps, choice of courses and some spectacular crash sequences. It's more ofa racing game than simulation, as controls and instrumentation has been kept to a minimum - there's nothing too much to worry about here apart from going very fast, avoiding the other cars and keeping on the road. And it works well enough, being very playable and actually quite compulsive, with the array of racing options adding to the game's longevity. The only dodgy factor is that the joystick option is restricted to the arcade mode - the more serious race options only allow mouse control. Very dodgy indeed. But apart from that, not at all bad.

☆☆☆☆

WILLY BEAMISH

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Dynamix/Sierra On-Line**

The Adventures of Willy Beamish, to give it its full name, is somewhat of a oddity. Dubbed an 'interactive cartoon', it's sort of a weird cross between *The Wonder Years* and *The Simpsons*. Willy is the typical all-American troublemaking pre-teen schoolkid, complete with grubby hands, pet frog and accordingly stereotypical family. Strange things are afoot in suburb of Frumpton, and Willy must investigate.

Willy is yet another of those games that sounds a whole lot better than it actually is. That's not to say that it's bad, but the gameplay is very trial-and-error, with luck often playing more of a part than skill or judgment. As such, more time is spent restoring saved games than actually playing, and it can get quite frustrating at times, especially when you have to sit through the comical set-piece for the umpteenth time. As an interactive cartoon, it's exclent, with suitably stereotypical characters, some funny jokes and gorgeous visuals. As a game it's compelling, but not in a way that encourages real addiction or involvement. You're unlikely to come back to again and again.

☆☆☆☆

WING COMMANDER II

Price **IBM PC £34.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Origin**

No matter what else you might say about the Wing Commander games, they look darned good. The trouble is, there isn't really much else to say about them. Well, perhaps that's a little harsh but here in the sequel to the much talked-about and little-played original, it's very much a case of more of the same.

Interstellar war with the Kilrathi continues, and in the most recent Kilrathi victory, the Confederation flagship Tiger's Claw has been destroyed by invisible Kilrathi stealth fighters. As the sole survivor of the assault, the player must first convince his federation comrades that the attack did genuinely take place and then lead a federation force to track them down and destroy them.

Graphically excellent although particularly processor heavy, Wing Commander II certainly isn't a brilliant game. It's a worthy sequel to its predecessor but is the sort of title where that trite old phrase about trying before buying is 100% appropriate.

☆☆☆

WOLFCHILD

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Blast**
Publisher **Core Design**

Okay, okay, so it's just another platform game. What separates Wolfchild from the ever-growing crowd is the sheer excellence of its execution. Rick Dangerous creator Simon Phipps has surpassed himself once again, creating a game that has everything an arcade afficionado could ask for - incredibly fast-paced action, superb graphics, awesome pyrotechnical displays, a rollicking soundtrack and... ooh, lots more besides.

The plot tells of a brilliant genetic scientist kidnapped by a corrupt corporation to produce mutant killing machines for their own dastardly ends. The scientist's son, Saul Morrow, bungs himself into his dad's prototype gene-splitting machine and turns himself into Wolfchild, a half-man, half-beast character with special energy-spitting powers.

What follows is five levels of top-level platform cum beat'em-up action with Saul switching back and forth between his human and beastly forms to help him progress. When enough energy is collected, Saul becomes the wolfman character and is blessed with the power to fire orbs of electrical energy at the mutant hordes that continually attack him.

It might not be the most original game in the world, its supreme playability more than makes up for any lack of real innovation. It's hard, fast and dangerous to know. Give it pride of place in your platform collection now.

☆☆☆☆☆

WORLD CLASS RUGBY

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Sports Simulation**
Publisher **Audiogenic**

Audiogenic have opted for a rigorous approach to the sport, offering plenty of accuracy and a great deal of scope for subtle play. And as such, it's somewhat more satisfying to play, if a bit harder to get into.

It's also a lot prettier, with play viewed from a 3D angle and all the players animate nicely if a little stiffly. If this doesn't appeal, there's a selection of other views on offer, including a no-nonsense top-down view for the more traditionally minded. World Class Rugby may not have Domark *Rugby*'s pick-up-and-play instant appeal, but it's a good bet that of the two this will be the one you'll still be loading up in a year's time.

☆☆☆☆

the blitter end

No time for any messing about this month, 'cos we've got a picture to fit in! Instead, let's get straight on with the carnival of slander!

Talk about trend-setting. You may remember last month's revelation in the Blitter about the rather unprofessional (yet strangely amusing) antics of a bunch of high-level software delegates while on business in foreign parts. Apparently, after partaking of a few beverages (which roly-poly Sean Brennan never does), the trio took it upon themselves to travel up and down in the hotel lift, stopping at every floor and filling the elevator car with furniture from the hallways. This is of course hilarious. But it's not as easy as it sounds. While this first group of phantom stackers disappeared silently into the night like ninjas, a copycat group of software bods were not so lucky when they tried it themselves during the recent World of Commodore show in London.

These copycat stackers went up and down in the elevator, filling it up with occasional tables, settees, chairs and pot plants as they went along. Unfortunately what they neglected to realise was that the whole thing was being monitored by the hotel's closed-circuit TV cameras. When said delegates tried to check out of the hotel, they received a thorough roasting from the management. Needless to say, the delegate's superiors were none too pleased when confronted with the video of what their staff get up to late at night. Frankly, Blitter doesn't see what the problem is. There's nothing wrong with a bit of boisterousness after you've had a few - especially when it's something as side-splitting as filling a lift up with assorted items of furniture. Don't people have a sense of humour these days?

***

It's amazing how good certain members of the industry can be at name-dropping when they try. Our own Gary Whitta can hardly resist the temptation to tell us all how he's top mates with Clive Barker at every available opportunity, Ad Manager Mike Wills has an uncanny knack of being able to drop the words "Dave Lee Travis" into every other sentence, and Ocean's Gary Bracey's hob-nobbing prowess is nothing short of legendary.

But none of these tales can compare to the awesome chin-spinner recently recounted by Probe Software head honcho Fergus McGovern. Apparently, while on business in the USA last year, our Ferg was staying at a five star hotel (as is his wont), with none other than movie megastar Al Pacino staying in the very next room. While entering the lift one fine morning, who should Fergus bump into but Big Al himself! Unfortunately, the teenage software whiz-kid became tongue-tied with awe and simply couldn't think of anything to say to the pint-sized Oscar-nominee. After about a minute of nervous stuttering, the best thing he could come up with was "I know somebody who's written a computer game about you", referring to the Godfather licence. Al, who's not known to be a big computer fan, was less than impressed by this startling revelation and replied with a polite yet prompt "Do you now?" before leaving the lift to embark upon some top movie project. Here at the Blitter we're reduced to similar states of starry-eyed awe whenever the legendary Derek Bitmap drops into the ACE office. It's like we were saying to Bobby DeNiro and Marty Scorsese just the other day...

***

After the runaway success of "educational" video The Lover's Guide, Blitter thought it'd jump on the bandwagon and print a few handy love hints of its own. In this first of a handy cut-out-and-keep series, we present some invaluable tips from none other than Finnish programmer Stavros Fasoulas, creator of such C64 greats as Sanxion, Delta and Quedex. With a programming record like that, you'd expect Stav to be a big hit with the ladies - and you'd be absolutely right. So heed his words of wisdom. Stav's first tip is that, should you ever choose to visit his home city of Helsinki, you should ensure you go at the right time of year. The reason for this is that, according to Stavros, Finnish women seem to change through different parts of the year. Go in Autumn or Winter and you could well receive a frosty reception from the femal locals, but try again in the Spring and Summer and you could well find the lusty lovelies practically throwing themselves at you! This is all of course completely unconfirmed, but Stavros swears it's true. And this is the man who urinated on Sensible Software's carpet, so he knows what he's talking about.

***

It has recently been brought to Blitter's attention how certain members of the software industry look uncannily like famous celebrities. It all started while Blitter was following the televised trial of William Kennedy Smith, and it dawned on us how the great Senator's nephew bears a striking resemblance to Computer + Video Games Ad Manager Jim Owens.

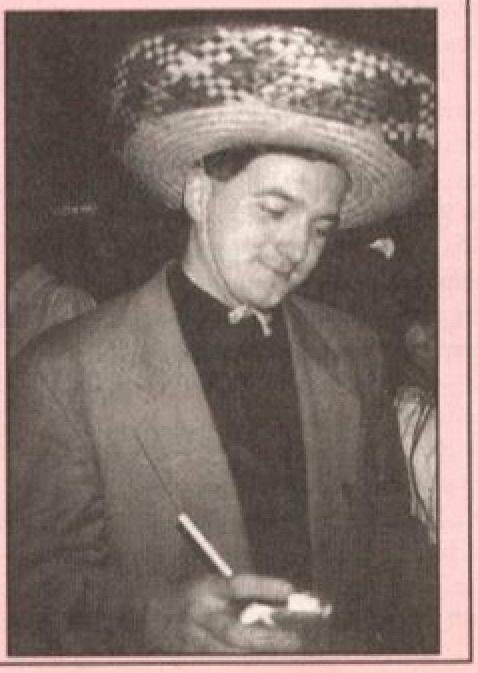
Another personal favourite is the particularly striking resemblance between Electronic Arts' PR Manager Simon Jeffery and fiery screen superstar Joe Pesci. Simes' no-nonsense features make him a dead ringer for the Oscar-winning star of Goodfellas and Home Alone. And what about Gremlin's Ian Stewart and Al Pacino in The Godfather Part III? Our particular favourite, however, has to be the uncanny likeness between Mirrorsoft Managing Director Peter Billota and Nintendo's Koopa-bashing superstar Mario! If you have any suggestions of your own, please call in and let us know. There's a special cash prize for anyone who can come up with an industry lookalike for Jimmy Krankie, Windsor Davis or Mr Bean. Look out for the results in next month's issue. Until then, keep 'em peeled!

●Blit Blit!

ACE PICTURE POWER!

This month sees the first of a regular feature in the Blitter - every month we'll be printing an embarrassing snapshot of an industry top dog caught in a compromising position. If you happen to have such a photo, Blitter would be very interested in taking a look-see, with a view to publication. There's a hefty brown envelope filled with used, non-sequentially numbered ten pound notes for the best one we receive each month.

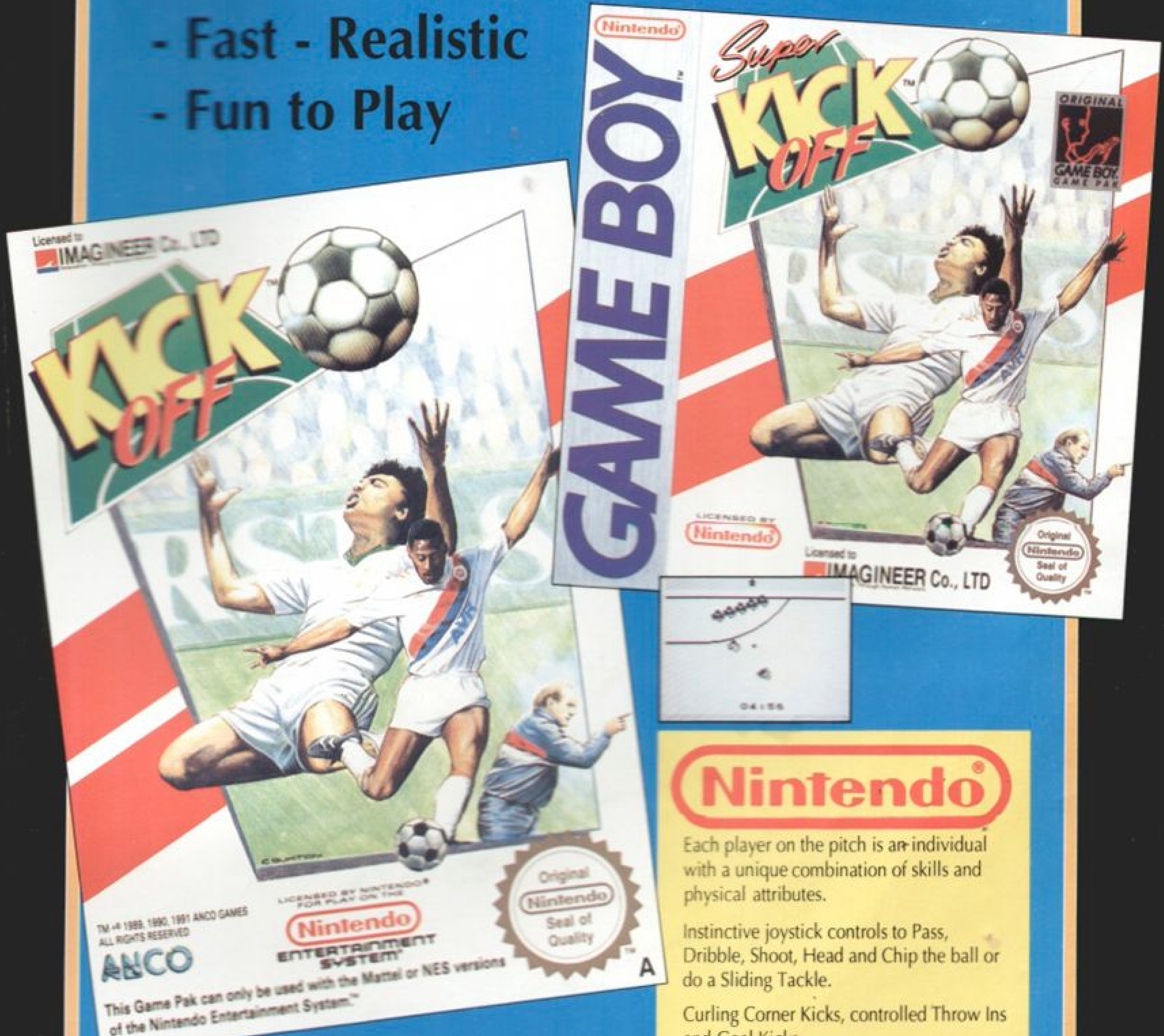
We kick off this month with this tantalising photey of interesting yet slightly dangerous (and roly-poly) Mirrorsoft Marketing Director Sean Brennan. This is in fact a rare shot indeed, as hardly anyone within the industry has never seen Sean the worse for drink. Some experts claim that this picture is in fact a highly elaborate hoax using sophisticated photo-trickery techniques, as everyone knows that Sean never touches a drop and, except for evenings, weekends, lunchtimes and occasional mornings and afternoons is always as sober as a judge. Next month we'll be printing a little-seen picture of Future's Publishing Director Greg Ingham with his mouth closed - also believed to be a hoax.

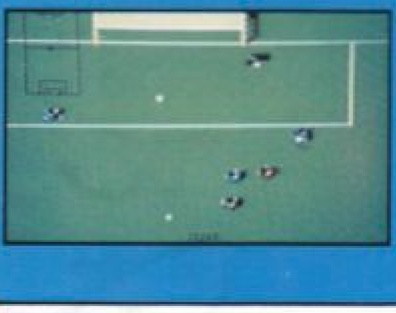


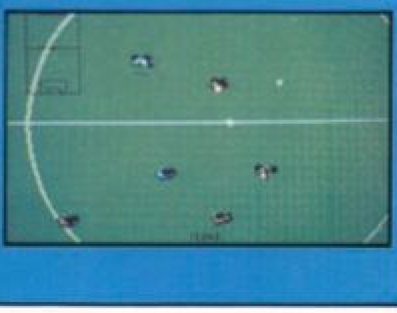
BLISTERING PACE

SOCCER AT IT's BEST.

- Fast - Realistic
- Fun to Play


Licensed to
IMAGINEER Co., LTD
KICK OFF
TM+© 1989, 1990, 1991 ANCO GAMES
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
ANCO
LICENSED BY NINTENDO® FOR PLAY ON THE
Nintendo ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM®
Original Nintendo Seal of Quality
A
This Game Pak can only be used with the Mattel or NES versions of the Nintendo Entertainment System.™
Nintendo
GAME BOY
Super KICK OFF
ORIGINAL GAME BOY GAME PAK
LICENSED BY Nintendo
Licensed to
IMAGINEER Co., LTD
Original Nintendo Seal of Quality
04:56





Nintendo®

Each player on the pitch is an individual with a unique combination of skills and physical attributes.

Instinctive joystick controls to Pass, Dribble, Shoot, Head and Chip the ball or do a Sliding Tackle.

Curling Corner Kicks, controlled Throw Ins and Goal Kicks.

Injury and Extra Time. Red and Yellow Cards. Set Piece Free Kicks and the famous AFTER TOUCH to let you bend, swerve and dip the ball. Plus a host of other options.

Cup, League and Euro Trophy Competitions with PENALTY SHOOT OUT.

Original Nintendo Seal of Quality™

Nintendo®, GAME BOY ™, the Nintendo product Seals and other marks designated as "TM" are trademarks of Nintendo.

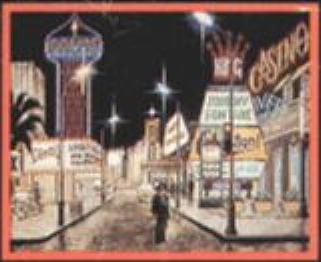
IMAGINEER Co., LTD
Innovation Through Human Network

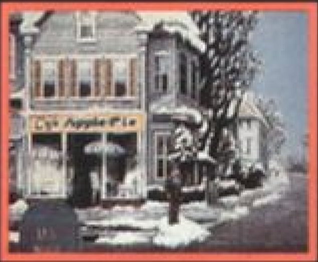
Distributed in U.K. by
ANCO SOFTWARE LTD., 7-8 Millside Industrial Estate, Lawson Road, Dartford, Kent. Tel: 0322 287782

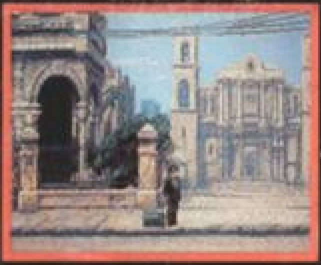
"You don't ask for power...
...You take it!"

The Godfather™

THE ACTION GAME



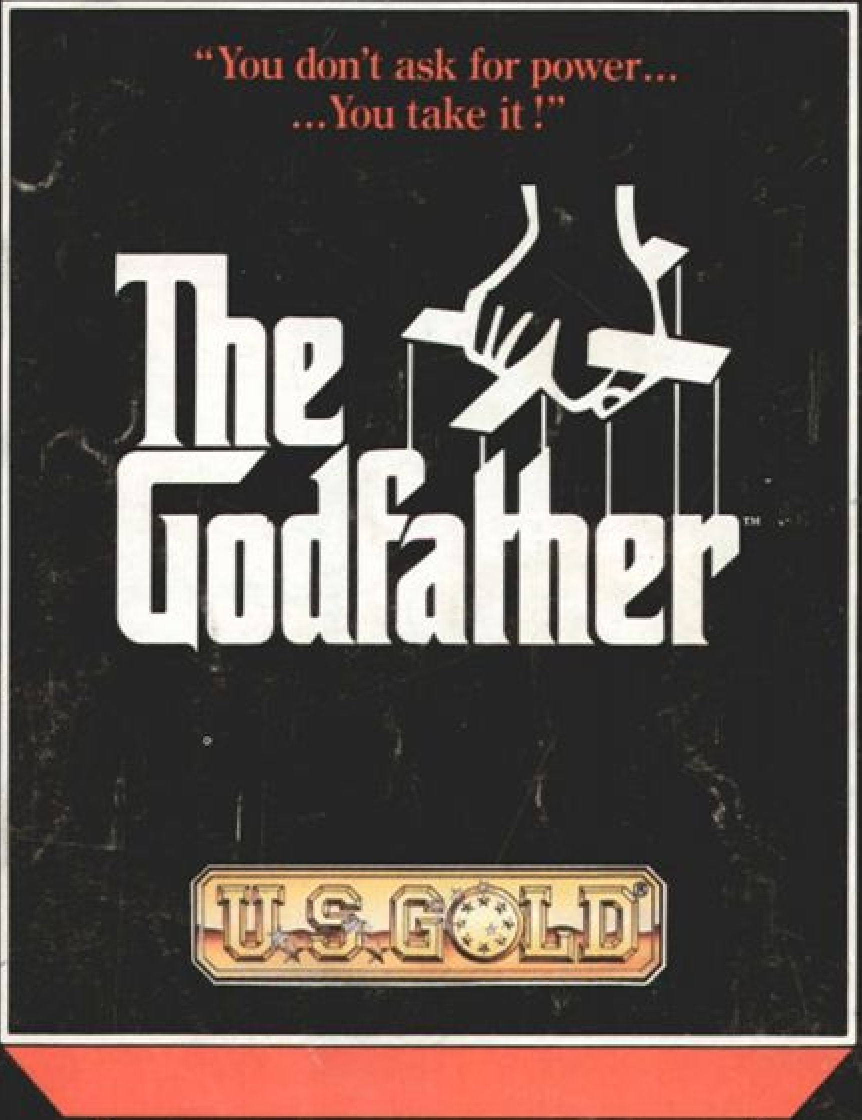




Screen shots from Amiga version.

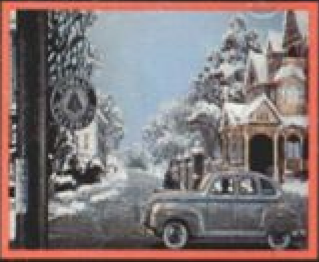
TM and © 1991 Paramount Pictures.
All rights reserved.
The GODFATHER is a registered
trademark of Paramount Pictures.
U.S. Gold Authorised User.

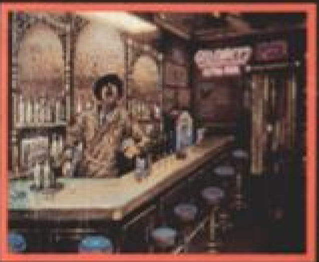
A Paramount Communications Company



U.S. GOLD®

U.S. GOLD LTD, Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford,
Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 625 3366.





**Available for
Atari ST,
Amiga, PC (VGA)**

Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the gameplay and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications

NEED HELP? CALL THE
GOLD PHONE
HINTS & TIPS LINE

HILLSFAR • DRAGONS OF FLAME • HEROES OF THE LANCE
TEL: 0898 442025

CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS • POOL OF RADIANCE
CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN TEL: 0898 442026

BUCK ROGERS • SECRET OF THE SILVER BLADES •
EYE OF THE BEHOLDER TEL: 0898 442030

OPERATION STEALTH • FUTURE WARS • CRUISE FOR A CORPSE TEL: 0839 654284

LUCASFILM HELPLINE • COMPETITION • INDIANA JONES •
ZAK MCKRACKEN • MANIAC MANSION • LOOM •
SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND • BATTLE OF BRITAIN
TEL: 0839 654123

NEW RELEASES • COMPETITION TEL: 0839 654124

**COMPETITION - £200.00 WORTH* OF
US GOLD GAMES TO BE WON EACH MONTH.**
* At Retail Prices

Service provided by U.S. GOLD LTD., UNITS 2/3, HOLFORD WAY, HOLFORD, BIRMINGHAM B6 7AX

If you are under 18 please get permission to use the telephone. Calls cost 34p per minute cheap rate, 45p per minute all other times.